



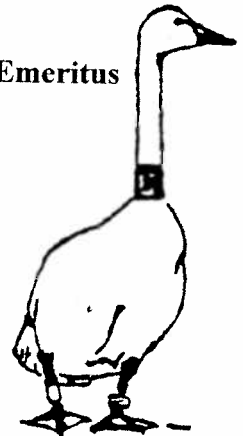
**Dr. Jim King interview with Dr. Bill Sladen, Johns Hopkins Professor Emeritus  
August 3, 2004**

*Ref. Book-Alaska, King, 26 May 06 (revised 13 Jun)*

**Discussion of The Swan Research Program's and  
particularly re Sladen's work with swans  
from King's study in Juneau, Alaska**

Original Tapes #1 - 90 Minutes: #2 - 60 Minutes  
Transcript prepared by Christy Baez, USFWS, February 14 - 24, 2005

*(Edited by Sladen in Ireland, later at Airlie (Jun-Sep05): then sent to King for his changes  
and returned to Sladen for final editing in Costa Rica & Airlie (May-Jun06)  
before returning to King in Jun06 to send to US FWS archives in W. Virginia)*

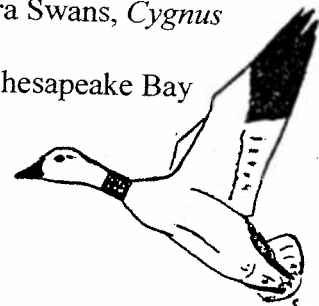


The references listed by Author & Year (e.g. **Scott et al. 1953**). They can then be found in Sladen's list of publications in his Curriculum Vitae (pp. 86-102 below). **For easy finding in the publication list, I have made these references bold print and underlined.**

**[Begin Tape One, Side One]**

**Jim:** The third day of August 2004. This is Jim King sitting in my study overlooking the Juneau tide flats and with me is Professor Bill Sladen, Professor Emeritus from Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, Baltimore, Maryland.

We've been talking about swans and I had to remember back that the first time I had met Bill was at an Alaska Science Conference in Fairbanks, in 1967, the year of the great flood there flood. We talked about swans then and made arrangements to do some fieldwork together. So, now I'm thinking it would be nice to record how it was that Bill Sladen, who had spent many years working on penguins in Antarctica, became interested in the Tundra Swans, *Cygnus columbianus columbianus* (formerly called the Whistling Swan) of the Chesapeake Bay and their relatives in Alaska. So, Bill, how did you get started in that?



**Bill:** Well, I should go back a little bit further than 1967 because in 1956 I came over from England on a Rockefeller Fellowship to continue my work, in what I had stated, the Polar Regions. I was interested, not only in the Antarctic and the avifauna there, especially the penguins, but also in the Arctic and its swans and geese. I was a close friend of Peter Scott, the late Sir Peter, founder of the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust in Slimbridge, England and co-founder of The World Wildlife Fund. By the way Peter was three years old when his dad, the famous Captain Robert Falcon Scott perished on his way back from the South Pole in March 1912. In a letter to his wife while freezing to death Scott had urged her to encourage the boy to appreciate Natural History.

*“Make the boy interested in natural history if you can: it is better than games: they encourage it at some schools. I know you will keep him in the open air.”*

The young Peter grew up to later have an enormous world wide influence in conservation, fulfilling his Father's dream, and no doubt the dream of Scott's closest companion, Dr. Edward Wilson (Scott's most talented doctor/naturalist/artist) who also died by his leader's side. Peter and I had done a fair amount of work together. He had joined me and Basil Morson just after World War II in Swedish Lapland to search for his favorite bird the Lesser White-fronted Goose, *Anser erythropus*. Later in July 1953 we had, with Hugh Boyd, learned the age old technique of catching molting Pink-footed Geese, *Anser brachyrhynchus*, of Central Iceland, but in our case for scientific banding not eating. This technique is now universally used for capturing and marking waterfowl, especially geese and swans.

**Jim:** Well Bill, how is it you happened to know Peter Scott in the first place? Did you go to college together?

**Bill:** No, I first met Peter just after World War II soon after he had founded the Severn Wildfowl Trust (now called the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust) on the Barclay estate at the little village of Slimbridge, not far from the city of Gloucester. I was a founding member of this Trust in 1946. In fact I had bird-watched on the “Dumbles” from World War II coastal defense pillboxes even before it was founded.

At that time my home was in Esher, Surrey, south of London, and I was back and forth from Antarctica. A Smew, *Mergellus albellus* (the Eurasian counterpart of our N. American Hooded Merganser, *Lophodytes cucullatus*, had trapped itself in the outlet pipe of one of the reservoirs close-by. I knew Peter was very keen on getting a Smew for his collection, so I telephoned him. He came dashing over to try and catch it. That was my first encounter with him.

Then there was the Swedish Lapland expedition in ?June ?1947. This is where the Lesser White-fronted Goose breeds. We had assistance from my first cousin, the late Baron Carl Reinholt von Essen. He was high up in the Swedish hierarchy and Peter loved titled people! In fact during the War cousin Carl was Swedish military attaché in London. Later, when retired he and his wife Violet were responsible for King Gustov’s household in Stockholm. His son, the late Lambart von Essen, about my age, was doing some important work on waterfowl. These were my contacts for our little expedition with a medical student, Basil Morson. Our mission was to study their distribution with a view of catching some for Peter’s growing collection at Slimbridge. We were unsuccessful. Regardless, Peter came over with one of my close friends, David McClintock, one of the best botanists in Britain at that time. David was the president of an air cargo firm that was promoting a new type of small twin engine cargo plane. The idea was that we could transport the geese, we never caught, back in this. I remember flying (for safety!)

at about two hundred feet above the North Atlantic. I believe the cargo carrier soon went out of business.

**(This is something that I'll have to try and refresh my memory later).**

I think that was my second encounter with Peter Scott. The next was in Iceland in 1953 (see above) with him and Hugh Boyd. Hugh, who later settled in Canada and became Senior research Biologist for the Canadian Wildlife Service, was Peter's first biologist at Slimbridge.

**Jim:** I just read that Hugh Boyd was recently awarded the highest Medal of honor in Canada

**Bill:** Yes, it was this year (2004) and "*Member of the Order of Canada*" for conservation.

That's wonderful. He deserved it. Similar membership also came to Bill Lishman and Harry Lumsden, also for conservation.

To divert - Hugh Boyd never finished a university degree. He was useless at exams, etc. Because of his many scientific publications (and still going strong at over 80) he was awarded an honorary PhD. His is an excellent example of how the lack of a PhD (I should add in those days!) did not bar you from a good scientific research job so long as you published worthwhile papers

To get back to Iceland in 1953 with Peter Scott and Hugh Boyd. I believe we were competing with Gus Cooch of CWS who at that time was catching molting snow geese in arctic Canada. Difficult to believe, its now just over 50 years ago! It was Peter's second expedition to Iceland. The summer before, with aide from ornithologist Finnur Gudmundsson and Icelandic farmers they learnt the technique. Incidentally, the farmers corralled the flightless geese for food, not to scientifically mark them.



In our 1953 expedition we caught a total of over 12,310 Pink-footed Geese of which 8,745 were newly banded (Scott, Boyd & Sladen 1955). Two catches were of over 1,300 birds. I recall the “Ring-and-Fling” for that number of geese took up to eleven hours. Our catching and handling techniques including keeping adults and goslings separate, providing food for the goslings and confining all until released at the same time.

So I got to know Peter pretty well on these occasions and at other times later. When he visited America, as he often did in connection with the World Wildlife Fund and fundraising for his Wildfowl Trust in UK he often said, “*Knowing your love for the Severn Wildfowl Trust, you should try and form a Wildfowl Trust of North America*”

Yes..... I did this eventually. That’s a story in itself - The Wildfowl Trust of North America (WTNA) on the Chesapeake Bay...

**Jim:** That’s right, I contributed birds from Alaska to WTNA, some of which were raised right here in Juneau. For 25 years we had as many as 40 wild stock geese and swans at our Sunny Point farm. We were always looking for places to put our surplus production, so we were very pleased to fill some of your needs.

**Bill:** Indeed yes: those beautiful Emperor Geese, *Anser canagicus*, and White-fronts, *A. albifrons*, and the now famous TrumpeterXWhistling Swan hybrids – the Trumpling Swans.

**Jim:** Tell us a bit more about the WTNA,

**Bill:** **(FILL IN LATER MORE ABOUT LAND PURCHACES AND PROGRAMS)**

**Bill:** So, that’s a story in itself. Yes, Peter was a wonderful friend. I learnt so much from him. Because of his background, connections and much sought-after artwork, I still rank him as the world’s best and most devoted conservationist.

Of course, we were not without occasional differences of opinion. For example, my idea for the WTNA was primarily saving an important and diverse wetland (which we did at Grasonville, Maryland) and then have an outstanding non-government operated center but with only a small exhibit of Chesapeake Bay waterfowl (and of course swans!). Peter on the other hand, being highly competitive was always aspiring to display the largest collection of ducks, geese and swans in the world (which he indeed accomplished at Slimbridge).

Then our methods of marking geese and swans were different. He, and at that time UK banders, thoroughly disagreed with the method I developed in the early 1970s of marking the birds with geographical color and unique to the bird coded neckbands in addition to the regular national metal bands. The Wildfowl Trust, then responsible for all waterfowl banding, relied on color, coded *tarsus* bands that could only be read when the bird was on land at close range and in non-muddy conditions. The numbers on our neckbands could readily identify the bird as an individual from almost half a mile away when swimming or on land. We would never have been able to define the extensive migration route of the Tundra Swan (an up to 8,000 mile round-trip between Alaska's Northern Slope and the East Coast) and get people excited about their extensive travels without these neckbands (Sladen 1975). In fact the neckband method was adopted by the Europeans and Soviet Union through the International Waterfowl Research Bureau (IWRB – now Wetlands International), with continued British “firm upper lip” denial. detailed Northern Hemisphere swan marking (all 5 taxa) protocol is discussed later (Sladen 1973a, 1973b & 1976, Sladen & Kistchinski 1977).

To get back to swans and Alaska: apart from my personal interest in swans, inspired by Peter Scott, we had a more important reason for studying them. On 22 November 1962 a United Airline Viscount aircraft flying from Newark, NJ, to Washington National airport was downed

over Ellicott City, MD, with the loss of all aboard. Two Tundra Swans (called Whistling Swans at that time) had hit the stabilizer on their mass non-stop migration from the Dakotas. Just before that, there had been more loss of life when another Viscount crashed at Boston airport from a flock of Starlings . The Boston crash could probably have been avoided, but the swan crash definitely not.

It happened to be one of those years when the swans had remained in North Dakota because they hadn't been frozen out of their feeding areas. A lot of them were migrating south to the Chesapeake Bay for winter at the same time. So, as is so often the case, you have to have human casualties before predicted happenings occur and funds become available for serious research. I should add that at that time very little was known about the migration routes of the Tundra Swan.

**Jim:** So, why was it you focused on the swans and not the starlings?

**Bill:** For obvious reasons! It gave me an excuse to continue my interest in swans and still keep in touch with Peter, or *Sir* Peter as he was later called. Yes - Sir Peter Scott - perhaps the very first to be knighted by the Queen for conservation. Later he was awarded "The Companion of Honor" one of the highest honors limited to less than twenty,

So money became available. I remember our team at Johns Hopkins University received its first funding of \$5,000 from the Canadian Wildlife Service because they were more interested and much more concerned about bird hazards to aircraft, particularly the Snow Geese, than the Americans. At that time we collaborated with Dr. Bill Gunn. Later we were funded by National Geographic and World Wildlife Fund and then more substantially by the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR).

**Jim:** Let's see, that's the Bill Gunn that was the "G" of LGL; the company that did a lot of environmental work in Alaska?

**Bill:** Yes, but to me it was Bill Gunn who was the pioneer in bird recordings of sounds. His sound of the loon has been heard on many wildlife films. Yes, he was an interesting person. So..... that was what gave me a good excuse to do serious research on swans.

*Sideline*...look at all these helicopters... are they from those "Love-boats" that 'invade'

Juneau so frequently in summer..... look at them, one after another flying in this rain!

**Jim:** Yes, they come in bunches of six. They take people to view the Juneau ice-field that is the source of all the glaciers around here; 26 I think.

**Bill:** Anyway, in 1970, Peter, with Luc Hoffman and others, had founded the International Waterfowl Research Bureau (IWRB), now called Wetlands International. In these post-war days and with the developing "Cold War" between the Soviet Union and the West, there was great concern for the conservation of migratory birds, especially those that are hunted, the greater proportion of which bred in the USSR., Thus at its start IWRB was founded exclusively for the Old World. The Americas were in no way involved. Dr. Jeffrey Matthews, Peter's chief scientist at Slimbridge, was the president and at that time IWRB was HQ'd at Slimbridge. IWRB was, at least in those days and I believe still is (though now much larger and thus more bureaucratic) a wonderful organization having specialist research groups made up of scientists from different countries for specific groups of waterbirds or activities (e.g. ducks, geese, pelicans, cranes, endangered species, hunting rationale, etc.), The coordinators of each group sat on one side of the table with representatives from member countries on the other side.

Peter Scott had two aims, the most important being to bring the Americas, especially the United States, into the IWRB network. The other was to start a Swan Research Group. By inviting me to become a member of the IWRB Executive Board as coordinator of the newly approved Swan Research Group he knew, in the fullness of time, the United States would become a member – as it indeed became later. To knock the nail firmly on the head we planned to have the First International Swan Symposium in England, and of course at Slimbridge in conjunction with the IWRB Exec. Board meetings

And so..... I sat on the opposite side of the table to the USA representative as a specialist representing world-wide swan conservation.

The United States rep. at that time was from the US Fish and Wildlife Service was I believe Dr. John Rogers. Later it was Rollin Sparrowe, now director of the Wildlife Management Institute. And there was somebody else, I can't remember, but you probably remember.

**Jim:** How long were you a member of the Exec. Board of IWRB ?

**Bill:** From 1970 until 1990. My last meeting on the IWRB Exec. Board was in the Volga River delta at Astrakhan before the Soviet Union broke up

By the way, 1970 was, I believe, the same year during the austral summer that I last visited as a research scientist our Johns Hopkins University Adelie Penguin study area at Cape Crozier, Ross Island, Antarctica which I started in 1959 when banding penguins there from the icebreaker Staten Island at the end of the International Geophysical Year (IGY).

**Jim:** So, in those early days of the Swan Research Program you were like the Arctic Tern, migrating between the Alaska arctic circle and the Antarctic circle enjoying an average of 22 hours of daylight ?

**Bill:** Indeed yes: don't forget it was good getting away from the heat of the Baltimore summer!

**Bill continues:** I need to divert a little from here since our work with penguins has important significance to our work with the swans and my relations later with the Soviet Union. I started research on penguins in 1948 when Medical Officer for the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS) – now called the British Antarctic Survey (BAS). During two summers of research, one at Hope Bay at the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula, the second on Signy Island, South Orkneys, provided me with enough data to write up my DPhil in zoology at the Edward Grey Institute of Ornithological Field Studies at Oxford University. By the way, the Oxford DPhil is the same as a PhD. The Oxford terminology is a little different. For example they call the MD degree a DM to be different!

I tried so hard to be able to justify recognizing individual swans by the tarsus bands with these codes and I couldn't do it – I couldn't do it at all like what we'd done with the penguins because swans hid their tarsus bands when swimming..

Every year for ten years, from 1960, we flipper-banded 5,000 Adelie Penguin fledglings just before they left for sea to build up a large population of known age. We wanted to study their behavior in relation to their age and their breeding experience. By the way I was the first to invent and use flipper bands (Sladen 1952, Sladen & Penney 1960). Like neckbands they require special skills to make and place them on flippers, the most important thing to remember is that the flipper doubles in thickness when the penguin molts. The flipper band must allow for this.

As already stated, we were forced to use neckbands on swans. At that time, the only person that had used neck bands on swans was our mutual friend, Harvey Nelson. He'd put plain yellow plastic neckbands on Tundra Swans at his Shiawassee NWR in the late 1960s. We

observed some of these in the Chesapeake Bay, but because there were no codes on them we could only say they were from Shiawassee. Of course, we all said, "That's a pity. Why can't we identify these birds as individuals as we had done for vast numbers of penguins"

**Jim:** Where's Shiawassee?

**Bill:** Shiawassee is in Michigan. Anyway, over a beer with my Hopkins students, we developed a very simple protocol that eventually included the entire circumpolar distribution of the five Northern Hemisphere swans (Tundra, Trumpeter, Whooper, Bewick's and Mute). It was very simple. Colors represented large and easily recognized geographic areas. For example any swan banded in Alaska was marked with a blue neckband; that's your Alaskan color Jim, the Forget-me-not. The same color was used for swans banded in Scandinavia. We started with red (changing later to orange because red faded and the white codes got colored with iron staining) for Arctic Canada and, *of course*, the same color was used for USSR's Siberia. The color for the Atlantic states and provinces was black; Russian Black Sea was also black. Anything west of the east coast, like Pennsylvania would be yellow, and then Rocky Mountains and California would be green, with comparable colors for Europe and Asia. .... etc etc.... So if we sighted a swan with a blue neckband in Maryland we would get very excited. We had neckbanded that swan in Alaska. It had traveled up to 4,000 miles right across the N. American continent to winter with us. If we saw something green that would be even more interesting than an Alaskan bird because a bird from the Western Population was transgressing into the Eastern population.

Our numbering system was also very simple. To allow plenty of individual codes (i.e. no duplications) we used a 4-digit code with letters or numbers. Each species of swan had its characteristic combination of letters and numbers. Since we started with Tundra Swans (at that time called the Whistling Swan), we obviously chose the best code for our own research; a letter

followed by three numbers (e.g. A123). The Tundra's Eurasian counterpart, the Bewick's Swan, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*, had the code of three numbers followed by a letter (e.g. 123A).

All letters had to be non-reversible to avoid confusion. For example, H196 could become 961H. Mute Swans, *Cygnus olor*, which we were also studying had two letters followed by two numbers (e.g. AC12)..... and so on. The idea was to identify the bird as a species as well as an individual and know in what fairly large geographic area it was banded in. Fortunately there were very few swan researchers at that time in North America.

It took a bit of time to convince Tom Barry in Arctic Canada but soon everyone in N.America were in agreement – AND - at that time we were the only ones making the neckbands, so we had control on the design, codes and colors. The literature on this (Sladen 1973a, 1973b & 1976, Sladen & Kistchinski 1977) is not often quoted, but this whole circumpolar scheme publicized to swan researchers through IWRB's Swan Research Group was the first of its kind. I should add that we took the design very seriously. It was tested carefully with captive birds at the Baltimore Zoo, through the enthusiasm of the then Asst. Director, John Moore, and later on the birds in our increasing collection of captive swans of various species.

The Europeans (especially the Danes and Swedes) and Soviets were extremely cooperative. Japan joined in later. The Japanese neckbanding is a story in itself and I'm not going to digress because we are talking about our Alaskan experiences!

The only fly in the ointment were my colleagues in Britain, of all people. The Wildfowl Trust in UK (responsible for all UK waterfowl banding) steadfastly refused to enter into the scheme having started before us a similar coding system for coded color tarsus bands, but just for their own British swans and geese.



The Swan Research program's protocol, still being used by my Eurasian colleagues, has been messed up now in N.America, but I don't want to talk about that now.

**Jim:** You skipped ahead here. You came to that 1967 meeting in Fairbanks before you started using neckbands...

**Bill:** That's right...

**Jim:** Then the following summer you came up and we went out to the Yukon Delta and put regular bands on a number of swans. We had been doing some of that with Mill Zahn. At that time he was the (FWS?) agent at the Dillingham. He and I had been catching some swans when I had been refuge manager out there, so we knew where we could get them and the timing. And I think it was that year, 1968? That was when we were staying in Cal Lensink's house and got talking about having an international swan meeting?

**Bill:** Oh!

**Jim:** Remember? You suggested having it at Whitehorse. Cal and I both thought at the Wildfowl Trust in Slimbridge, England. We wanted to go to England.

**Bill:** I had forgotten about that, yes, I believe that's right. This was before I got involved with the International Waterfowl Research Bureau (IWRB) in 1970. But, when you were banding swans at that time, were you using color bands?

**Jim:** No, just metal leg bands...

**Bill:** Yes..... Don't forget we need to talk about the first Trumpeter Swan neckbanding, too, which the Swan Research Program initiated. But before the Trumpeter neckbanding, I published a paper (Sladen 1973a) in Peter Scott's journal *Wildfowl*, commenting on the fact that neckbanding swans increased remarkably the chances of re-sighting that bird. From samples of



about 170 birds marked in three different ways those neckbanded resulted in 84% re-sightings whereas those only metal banded resulted in only 7% not re-sighted but either re-trapped or dead. Tundra swans that had been marked with coded color plastic bands as well as metal resulted in only 8%.re-trapped or dead, very little improvement on metal bands only (Sladen 1973a).

The wonderful thing about the neckband technique, which we really did pioneer, was that we were getting multiple re-sightings of a *live and mostly undisturbed bird* throughout an 8,000 mile round trip between Alaska and its Atlantic wintering grounds. We could not convince the Brits. Peter Scott thought it would anger their membership to see a neckband flopping up and down a neck of an elegant swan. On the contrary, with us in N.America it greatly increased people's interest in the birds. We had up to a hundred volunteers in those days enjoying sighting the birds throughout the Continent.

**Jim:** Now you're jumping again...

**Bill:** I'm jumping, yes. Sorry. Well anyway, let me finish my trend of thought or I will forget it. Of the very first ten Tundra Swans that we neckbanded with you on Alaska's Northern Slope in 1970, mostly in the Colville Delta, all ten were re-sighted as live individuals in either Maryland, North Carolina, or Virginia within the next two winters. We were very proud of our results. We also harnessed a few Tundra Swans with radios, mostly on the winter grounds, and tracked them by aircraft as far as the prairies. This was also a "first" (Sladen 1975).

**Jim:** You didn't mention the summer you spent with the Jay Hammond who subsequently became Governor of Alaska, probably from the good experience he had with you catching swans!

**Bill:** That must have been 1968 (or 1969, Jim says 1968). Yes, I was with my postdoctoral student Dr. Ray Sweinsburg. He wrote his PhD thesis on the Peccary at University of West Virginia, so it was a bit of a change to be working on big birds instead of wild pigs. During that summer I believe we put color tarsus bands on Tundra Swans in the Clarence Rhode refuge near Bethel

We first used neckbands in 1970. You and I (?? with Jim Bartonek, then FWS Pacific Flyway Representative) left Fairbanks on 2Aug. and stayed with Angus Gavin in Prudhoe at the beginning of the now extensive oilfield there.\*\*

*\*\* Jim's note: The Prudhoe Bay oil discovery was announced in 1968. The pipeline was not completed until 1977, so when we were there in 1970 field development was at a fairly early stage,. NEPA was signed in 1969, so some political gymnastics had held up development of the pipeline.*

At that time I was with John Moore, Asst Director of the Baltimore Zoo, who had been a constant and helpful companion and helped me start the Swan Research Program. John was also interested in catching some Long-tailed Ducks (Old Squaw), *Clangula hyemalis*, for the zoo.

*(that's another story - how we caught the ducks,  
with help from the local people in their leaky boat!)*

Angus Gavin was the public relations guy for ARCO and, being a part of the Ducks Unlimited hierarchy, was very interested in our research with the swans. This was helpful

because he had a helicopter at his disposal! We stayed as Angus's guests at Prudhoe until 7Aug. and then went to the village of Barrow where we visited with Tom Brower. John Moore and I flew back home from Barrow, We had a lot of fog but did manage to neckband some birds as well as read two black (from Maryland) neckbands, proving for the first time that Alaska's North Slope Tundra Swans migrated right across the continent from west to east to winter along the Atlantic coast (Sladen 1975, etc).

That summer I sent Ray Sweinsberg, now an experienced neckbander, to work with Tom Barry in the Mackenzie and Anderson River Deltas, NWT.

**(Later I might add some of the red neckband returns from NWT –**

**The AK neckbands were blue)**

By the way, it was wonderful being with Jay Hammond in 1969. At that time we were using the Peter Scott technique of metal band on one tarsus and a colored (blue for Alaska) plastic alpha-numeral coded band on the other tarsus. The Swan Research Group of IWRB, of which I was the Coordinator, had already worked out a simple protocol for all the circumpolar swans (*this described above with references*).

Jay was a very experienced pilot, a great character and indomitable conservationist. Some birds were difficult to catch by his float plane. If we could not catch them we went on for another group. Then stop for lunch and have wonderful conservation chats, mostly about Alaska. Can I diverge from swans to Jay Hammond?

**Bill continues:** It is just possible I might have had some influence in initially getting him into the Alaskan legislation. Being a medical guy in a medical institution (the great Johns Hopkins School of Public Health!) meant that I had to justify my existence by doing some

medical research. Our department, at that time called *Pathobiology* (now not such a simple title “Molecular Microbiology and Immunology”) was extremely diverse. In the late 1950s I had received a grant from the National Institute of Health (NIH) to cooperate with their virologists in isolating the viruses that were responsible for the Common Cold. I needed as isolated community as I could find in Alaska, but it had to have reliable electricity for my sub-zero freezers. I chose the Pribilof Islands as my study area which was semi-isolated (and wonderful for birds!!). I worked on this research for most of two years between 1959 and 1961 sending samples of throat and nose swabs and blood to NIH via the then famous Reeves Aleutian Airline.

A white teacher there was from Bristol Bay, the home of Hammond and his Eskimo-born wife. I was bemoaning the fact that politicians these days were either lawyers or into real estate; none had conservation or biological background. I was told that Hammond, who had a good conservation background, probably could be persuaded to have a go at being elected. I think he entered the race as a joke. But, to his surprise he got elected.

**Jim:** Yes, at that time he flew for you in 1969 catching swans, he was in the AK legislation. In 1974 he was elected Governor of Alaska and served in that capacity for 8 years

**Bill:** He did a good job. By the way, I was very proud of the fact that two of my former Johns Hopkins PhD students Drs Robert LeResche and Frank L. Williamson were selected by Hammond as members of his cabinet. Bob, who became Commissioner for the Alaska Department of Natural Resources had researched extensively on Alaska’s moose, but did his PhD on the Antarctic Adelie Penguin (Ainley, LeResche & Sladen 1983). Frank, who became head of AK’s Dept. of Health after a spell with National Science Foundation’s Polar Program in Washington, DC had researched avian pox in birds and had a good Public Health background.

**Jim:** What years were you researching the Common Cold on the Pribilofs?

**Bill:** 1959 to 1961. I had to come back for my one important teaching course – “The Biological Basis of Public Health”.

**Jim:** So you had to justify your professorship at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

**Bill:** Absolutely !

**Jim:** Also as a professional ornithologist?

**Bill:** Yes! Well, as already stated, in order to study the Common Cold and collect viruses we had to have a reliable electrical supply. For my study subjects I needed as isolated a village as possible. The Aleuts on the Pribilofs were just wonderful cooperators. We took nasal and throat swabs and samples of blood. They all had to be sent under dry ice back to NIH in Bethesda, MD. This was where Reeves Aleutian Airlines became very handy. We made good friends with them.

By the way, I wrote up my London MD (a higher degree than the MB, BS (= our American MD) on upper respiratory potential pathogens (e.g. *Staph. aureus* and *Streptococci*) in the nose and throats of our isolated community when Medical Officer, 1948 to 1952, in Antarctica for the British Antarctic Survey (then called The Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (Sladen 1965). So I was very interested in this subject, especially as in Antarctica's isolation we never caught the Common Cold.

Anyway, it was necessary to have a reliable electrical source and a semi-isolated community. St. Paul Island was visited once a week by Reeves Aleutian Airlines. However, St. George Island, at that time in the late 50's, early 60's, was only visited occasionally by boat and the boat did not come very often. So this was as ideal an epidemiological situation as could be found.

But it was also a *jolly good place for birds*. In fact my long time British friend James Fischer and American friend Roger Tory Peterson had written a book called “Wild America” about their mutual experiences as Roger Tory showed James all the good birding spots in America. The Pribilofs was their last chapter – the *ultimate* for the American birder. And, in actual fact, I being there before the seal biologists (i.e. in late May and June during migration time) I was able to add five new species (Greenshank, *Tringa nebularia*, Spotted Redshank, *T. erythropus*, Grey Wagtail, *Motacilla cinerea*, Nordmann’s Tern, *Sterna hirundo longipennis*, and ??? to the American list and quite a few second records (Sladen 1966).

**Jim:** Nordmann’s Tern?

**Bill:** Yes it is a NE Siberian sub-species of the Common Tern with an all black bill. I also reported the Smew (the Hooded Merganser’s Eurasian counterpart) my favorite duck that I associated with my first meeting Peter Scott. This was the second record for N. America, the first I believe had been in New York the year before. In all I made two sightings of this beautiful duck. This was one of several second records. All my specimens are in the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian in Washington, DC

**Jim:** Those were the times....

**Bill:** We’ve got off the line again... I was talking about my possible influence in getting Jay Hammond into politics. When on the Pribilofs in 1959-61 I became friendly with a teacher that lived in Bristol Bay. Bemoaning the fact that most politicians were either lawyers or connected with big business, I said it was about time a conservationist got into it. Well they passed this on to Jay. And Jay seems to have taken it as a joke.... No harm in having a crack at it. In all his writing it seemed that he never expected to get into the AK legislation in the first place and

certainly not Governor. But he made it regardless. It's a pity more people like Jay are not around these days.

**Jim:** Getting back, I have a little anecdote I want to put in here. When Sasha Kistchinski, your Soviet counterpart of the Northern Waterfowl Project of the US/USSR Environmental Protection Agreement of 1973, engineered by Russell Train for President Nixon, visited me in Juneau..

**Bill:** Can we keep that for a separate subject? There's so much to talk about my collaboration with the Soviets during the Cold War and the visit I have just made 29 years later to Wrangel Island in NE Siberia where many of our CA, WA and BC wintering Snow geese bred.

**Jim:** Well, I just wanted to mention the time that we went over to Sitka...

**Bill:** Oh that's right, yes, yes.

**Jim:** I took you and Sasha over to Sitka in the FWS Beaver airplane. We walked around and had lunch. Then I thought he'd be interested in seeing the Russian cathedral there. We walked in and the Russian priest (Bill -check a Priest or Deacon?) was there...

**Jim:** He was in his robes and came over to talk--

**Bill:** He kept on eyeing me, didn't he? He kept on sort of looking at me and less so at the Russian...

**Jim:** ...and so I thought he'd be interested that here was a Russian visiting his church because that was, at that time one of the last buildings actually built by Russians in Russian America. And so I introduced Dr. Kistchinski from Moscow and then I said this is Professor Sladen from Johns Hopkins. "Oh, Dr. Sladen!" the ???deacon exclaimed. And it turns out he was one of the Pribilof boys that you had swabbed a number of years ago...



**Bill:** Yes, he was one of my volunteers. Actually I have a slightly different version of that. I don't know which one is true, but I thought he was eyeing me and sort of looked a little bit suspicious. And then he came up to me and said, "Oh by the way, you're not Dr. Sladen, are you?" I said yes! I believe he recognized me from afar off. Anyway we renewed old acquaintances. Whatever the story is, it's an interesting one. We had a lot of fun during that visit and I believe you taking us to Sitka did a lot for American-Soviet relations during that period of the Cold War.

You know, when I was on the Pribilofs it was the time when the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries (BCF) was in charge. It was a transition stage when the Aleuts were being given more responsibilities. Actually the BCF staff (I guess the head guy was Howard Baltzo) at that time were the only ones who were allowed to have frozen foods. The Aleuts were rather angry about that! And it was the first time that the Aleuts were being given a little bit more chance to govern themselves. We were there at that very interesting time. I think we might have done some good because of my non-American British accent.

**Jim:** Howard Baltzo? He'd been a Fish and Wildlife Assistant Regional Director before he was put in charge of the Pribilofs...

**Bill:** Well he was a very nice guy (most of the time!!). In one instance when we crossed swords, for reasons unknown, he denied me a bird collecting permit for my second visit there. That was *very quickly* reversed by the Secretary of the Interior and the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC, because we were collecting some very important specimens (Sladen 1966). Anyway, it would not have mattered if I had not received my permit because the Aleuts at the time could collect anything they wanted. Yes even the rare Red-legged

Kittiwakes, *Rissa brevirostris*, that bred on the surrounding cliffs. Anyway my sojourn on the Pribilofs was fascinating, absolutely fascinating...

Oh yes, and the other bird I saw was the Far Eastern Curlew, *Numenius madagascanensis*. I did not collect it. I took a picture of it through my telescope which I thought was good enough to see the enormous length of the bill. But the people (including Roger Tory Peterson) who were judging it for new to North America did not allow it - because - "it could not be distinguished for certain from the Long-billed Curlew" (*N. americanus*). Come on !!! The Long-billed Curlew would have been much further out of range than the Far Eastern. To confirm I really did see the first record of the Far Eastern Curlew for N. America during the next season (I believe) a specimen was collected. It has now been proven as a regular, though rare, visitor.

Yes the Pribilofs was an absolutely fabulous place for anybody resident, as I was then; not just a visitor for a few days hoping for good birds and good weather. So anyway... we should get back to the Alaskan swans....

**Jim:** Well yeah, I got a few more questions. It was 1970 when you arranged that we could stay at the Prudhoe Bay oilfield camp with Angus Gavin. But before that you had started putting these black neck collars on swans in Chesapeake Bay and dyeing them various colors. What I wanted to ask you was how you were catching them. What kind of traps were you using to catch these swans in the Bay?

**Bill:** We need to narrate that story of when you were flying over the tundra on the Northern Slope of Alaska...

**Jim:** Well, let's catch 'em first.

**Bill:** In those days, in the early 1970s on their wintering grounds in the Chesapeake Bay, we were catching them by a funnel trap.

**Jim:** With bait?

**Bill:** Yes with corn. In winter, we have always caught birds with whole corn bait, either by traps in the water or luring them onto land from the water. This last method required a specially constructed baiting area on dry, firm land onto which they could walk from the water to feed; then fire a rocket net over them. We used this second method for many years in cooperation with FWS at the Mattamuskeet and Pungo National Wildlife Refuges in North Carolina, working out with the refuge managers and FWS biologists an extremely efficient method with assistance from a large number of volunteers or college students.

**Jim:** Did you not demonstrate this method on one of the field trips to North Carolina during the 4<sup>th</sup> International Swan Symposium at Airlie Virginia in February 2001?

**Bill:** Yes, the technique they used then was much the same, though our Swan Research Program (SRP) had not banded there now for several years.

**Jim:** Why the emphasis on *dry firm land*?

**Bill:** Well, so often now it is 'convenient' for other workers to bait in harvested corn fields (or even spring grain) away from the water where the swans flight in to feed during the day. They shoot the nets in resulting soft ground.

**Jim:** With what results?

**Bill:** Horrible results! Unless it is a very small catch (and even then) the birds struggling under the net before being removed get plastered with mud. On the only occasion we used this technique we had marked birds often unable to immediately fly when released (always our motto for correctly handling a swan, it must fly after release) because of wet non-oiled plumage. They need to walk to water to wash and preen. Some were seen walking over a main highway; not very good public relations! After this one only experience I decreed..... *never again*, at least for the Swan Research Program.

**Pause...** Well, we need to narrate that story of you when flying over the Alaskan tundra...

**Jim:** Well, we still need to catch 'em first. What about the funnel trap technique?

**Bill:** Okay. Catch 'em first; just a straight funnel trap about 6-10 ft diameter with bait. The funnel had to just allow the bird to squeeze itself in. It is then almost impossible for them to get out again; rather like the crab pot technique.

But we no longer use this method because the birds are so addicted to corn we just need to let them get used to a non-funnel trap with a wide entrance and close it just before catching time.

**Jim:** In how deep of water?

**Bill:** Fairly shallow tidal water. The traps were of wire 6ft high. The birds could not fly out, so unlike geese or ducks, we did not need any netting on top. The bird you are referring to was trapped in the West River, near Annapolis, Maryland.

**Jim:** What about dyeing?

**Bill:** Yes, dyeing was an important initial aid in our migration studies. When we started studying the Tundra Swan migration routes we were not sure if the birds wintered in specific areas in the Bay from specific breeding areas. We worked out a simple scheme for dyeing the swans using nyansol (a black dye used by the fur industry) and picric acid. Picric acid proved to be the best dye because it lasted very well. Starting bright yellow it oxidized to a deep orange. And with a lot of foresight (!!), again over our beer and chats with my Hopkins students, we decided that the five different locations we would band the birds at in the Chesapeake Bay would have a characteristic pattern of dye.

Thus, all birds banded from one location were dyed on the port side, those from another location on the starboard side. Since these two patterns could not have been seen if we were observing the sedentary swan from the wrong side we dyed the same color about 1/3 up the

neck. We would then be alerted to a dyed bird. Two more patterns of dye were front half and rear half of the back. The fifth pattern was the entire back.

By the way we used this same series of patterns later with Canvasbacks (Welling & Sladen 1979). Later researcher did not follow this method. They just dunked the ducks into the dye. So there was not different pattern for locations... not very sophisticated!

Back to the swans; we wanted to find out if these five wintering places with their special patterns of dye were compatible to five areas where the birds were nesting in the Arctic. We never thought they would traverse the whole continent from the Atlantic to finish up in Alaska's Northern Slope. We thought the Northwest Territories and east was the most likely areas of breeding.

**Bill:** But anyway, you were piloting the FWS Beaver aircraft, with passenger me, over the Coleville River delta on Alaska's Northern Slope in the late summer of 1970.

By the way, anyone reading this needs go to their attic and find the *National Geographic* magazine of July 1975 article I wrote titled: *TIRELESS VOYAGER – THE WHISTLING SWAN* (Sladen 1975) which starts off:

“‘*Color-dyed swan below!*’ As our floatplane circled low over the tundra on Alaska's North Slope, pilot Jim King's sudden shout called our attention to a pair of swans swimming on a lake; one bird's plumage bore patches of familiar orange dye”

**Jim:** Yes, I landed the plane and you walked out on the tundra with your telescope and tripod and read the code on the black neckband.

**Bill:** The color was black for all swans neckbanded along the Atlantic Flyway. Through my telescope (the birds were pretty wary and my hands were a bit shaky with excitement) I read the

code. It was C028; i.e. C for Chesapeake Bay and the code number 028, unique to that particular swan. Of course it also had a FWS metal band but that would have been impossible to read. Then I clearly remember you enthusiastically shouting, "Do you want to catch it?" I yelled back, "NO, it's already banded! But let's catch its unmarked partner." And this we did ! Since we were neckbanding in Alaska which according to our IWRB International Swan Marking Protocol required a *blue* neckband with its unique code we marked it **A301**. This was the first swan neckbanded on the North Slope.

Both birds were flightless. **C028** was shedding its golden (picric acid dyed) primaries on the tundra, so I picked up some of these for future reference.

**Jim:** I still have some of those feathers! They didn't have any young.

**Bill:** Correct, they had no young. That was probably why they were both molting at the same time. If they have young the female usually molts her primaries first, thus becoming flightless, soon after the young have hatched leaving the male to effectively defend the brood when small. He molts later.

Remarkably, less than four months later, in December, we sighted a pair of swans in the Chesapeake Bay, one had a black, the other a blue neckband. They were our Alaska North Slope friends safely back from a near 4,000 mile migration. Since *National Geographic* wanted names for my article, I gave the blue neckbanded male (A301) the name *Bud*, as in Bud Helmericks, whose home on the delta was within sight of the swan's lake. We named the female (C028) *Hope*, because they were later seen in the little village of Hope on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay. I often have meant to contact the little village of Hope near Anchorage to share this story but so far have never called them.

So that was our first experience with swans on the North Slope - AND - with our neckbands we were able to follow this pair for 10 more years and record their broods both in Alaska and in the Bay, something that satellites have yet to accomplish. Eventually the neckbands must have fallen off and thus the birds had "been loaned" to science and now were free to live their lives without our prying scientific eyes

**Jim:** Well, Jim Bartonek was with us and, as previously stated, we stayed at the oil camp at Prudhoe Bay as the guest of Angus Gavin'

**Bill:** No, I can't remember. I thought it was you who made the arrangements. Though now I think about it, it might have been my connection with Robert O. Anderson who at that time was CEO of ARCO. He happened to be one of the board members of our Wildfowl trust of North America. I know Angus was very happy for good publicity to allow his helicopter to be used during the next summer to catch and neckband the Tundra Swans in the oilfield. As previously stated, John Moore, Asst. Director of the Baltimore Zoo was with me.

**Jim:** For snow geese? ...

**Bill:** No, it was a later visit for Snow Geese. We had a small grant from ?LBGunn (Canadian bird voice recorder Bill Gunn's outfit that did a lot of work in AK) to neckband Snow Geese that had started to breed in the Sag River delta. At that time we were the first to use dogs to help round up Lesser Snow Geese, *Anser caerulescens caerulescens*, there. Then later Tundra Swans on the N. Slope tundra and even Trumpeter Swans, *Cygnus cygnus buccinator*, near Fairbanks further south. But that's another story and Jim, you were not involved in that escapade! **(BILL WILL ADD TO THIS LATER)**

**Jim:** Well a couple of other interesting events from that trip were that Gavin had a helicopter, but it didn't have floats and his pilot would not fly over open water. So we flew Gavin out in the FWS Beaver to Cross Island, offshore from Prudhoe Bay, because he'd been interested in the Barrier Islands along there. So we landed there. There was an old trapper's cabin made out of driftwood. The roof had fallen in. There were about ten Common Eider nests inside this little structure. The nests were just far enough apart that the incubating females couldn't peck each other.

Angus Gavin was really impressed with those nesting birds and later on when he learned that the engineers were thinking of using some of these islands as drilling pads or gravel quarries, he was able to convince the company that that was not appropriate. Those offshore islands had to be left alone because of the eiders. Later it turned out there were other interesting birds on those islands like the Black Guillemots and that George Devokey has spent so much time studying.

But anyway that good bit of conservation resulted from our trip to Prudhoe Bay. The other thing that was pretty neat was after we left Prudhoe we went to Barrow and had dinner with Tommy Brower...

**Bill:** Oh, I remember that...

**Jim:** Tommy was the son of Charlie Brower who had collected birds for Alfred Bailey for twenty years. All his specimens are mentioned and there are lots of references to Tommy Brower in Alfred Bailey's book on the birds of Arctic Alaska. And he wasn't particularly polite. We went in the restaurant and introduced ourselves and wasn't particularly friendly. But



then he overheard us talking about birds and he came over and sat down with us. Yes, we then had a great conversation with him. He was very interested in the swans and the neckbands we had sighted

Do you remember Jim Bartonek played a trick on you? He and I were doing something out of Kotzebue and you had been flying with Tony Bernhardt. We met in the hotel. We had sighted a neckbanded Tundra Swan and Bartonek said that he would disclose its location provided you bought a round of beers. We went to the place in Kotzebue that sold beers and it turned out the cost of a beer there was about four or five times what the cost of a beer in Baltimore was. Anyway, you bought the beer and learned where we'd seen the neckbanded swan.

**Bill:** I must look up this record because it probably was not one of our Chesapeake Bay birds.

**Jim:** Well, I can't remember the story on the swan now, but it turned out that the Kotzebue birds are not Chesapeake birds they primarily winter in California. Yes that was another first for your Swan Research Program.

**Bill:** Right; our paper for the third International Swan Symposium held at Oxford, UK (Limpert et al. 1991) states there is just a wee bit of overlap in that area. However all the swans from the North Slope came East into the Atlantic Flyway.

**Jim:** Well, we're about to run out of tape and I'll turn this thing over here. What else should we cover on the swans?

**Bill:** Well, I'd like to mention the first neckbanding of the Trumpeter Swan because this bird was even more holy than the Tundra Swan. The Trumpeter Swan is completely protected, unlike the Tundra Swan that is being hunted which we finally discovered entirely for sport. If

you shot a Trumpeter, in those days, you'd really be liable for a big fine and a lot of bad publicity. I cannot remember when we first started banding them but I know it was with Bob Richey in the Kenai Moose Range in the early 1970's. It's a historic paper I hope to publish in the *North American Swans*. Had not Hansen done some work on them?

**Jim:** Well Peter Sheppard had banded some in the Bremner River

**Bill:** Peter Sheppard, yes, but only with metal bands which would never identify the bird unless illegally shot or found dead.

**Jim:** Right.

**Bill:** And so the Swan Research Program was the first to neckband Trumpeters and *again* in cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service. I often state we have only received one small grant from FWS ever (to study Canvasbacks in the Bay) but you quite rightly counter this by stating we've had an enormous amount of cooperation at the Refuges and the working level from FWS. The best examples have been flying with you during these exciting Alaskan days.

The only times when we had free rides, other than with you, was with Angus Gavin. We had to pay for all our other rides, for example on the Kobuk River, etc. So the neckbanding of Trumpeters at the Kenai Moose Range with the then Assistant Manager, Bob Richey, was another important first for swans.

**[End of Tape One, Side One]**

**[Begin Tape One, Side Two]**

**Jim:** Continuing our conversation between myself, Jim King and Professor Bill Sladen. Well, Bill, you were talking about the trips that you were able to make with me and it occurs to me that I was really lucky in that period when, after Statehood, the Fish and Wildlife in Alaska

had been cut way back and I could do whatever I thought was good for birds with a few exceptions. I had to keep up my work for Patuxent, my surveys, but being able to do something like the little exploratory trips that I did with you was possible. It was really a wonderful time to be working for the Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Bill:** Yes, we were very fortunate to have that opportunity especially because we had so few funds and planes were extremely expensive. We had limited funds from the National Geographic Society, as well as from the US Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR) in connection with bird hazards to aircraft. Our task was to define the migration routes of the Tundra Swan, at that time little was known, and especially in connection with flying over big cities..

I think one of the classic examples of your wonderful help is when Sasha Kistchinski visited us from the Soviet Union under the auspices of the US-USSR Environmental Protection Agreement (set up by Russell Train on behalf of President Nixon). We were visiting your home in Juneau. You suddenly had a bright idea,

“Oh, why don’t we get into the Beaver and fly over to Sitka, and show you your former Russian capital city!” Tell that story – it was really interesting. Or have we already told it?

**Jim:** Did we put that on the tape?

**Bill:** Well, let’s put it on again. It probably has been on, but anyway...

**Jim:** The funny thing was going to the Russian cathedral there and I thought the Russian priest would be interested in a real Russian because he was an Alaskan native. But he wasn’t all that interested in the Russian, Sasha Kistchinski; he was interested in *Dr. Sladen* (*emphasis*) who had studied...

**Bill:** Yes, the common cold.

**Jim:** The common cold on the Pribilofs when he was a kid.

We had some good times with Sasha Kistchinski. Tell us some more about him.

**Bill:** Well; it all started with my association and friendship with The Honorable Russell Train, who was the first Chairman of the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) under Nixon, and then became the second administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). His wife Aileen was on our Board of the Wildfowl Trust of North America and we banded Tundra Swans at his Bozman farm in Maryland. We also got to know their son Bowdie, now an important lawyer in Washington, who at 16 years helped us chase and band swans in Alaska under a National Geographic grant.

I was very fortunate in being selected as a member of the first committee that went to Moscow to discuss the US-USSR Environmental Protection Agreement in February 1973. My interest was, of course, in swans because the Bering Straits is a very interesting area where all four of the Northern Swans: the Eurasian Whooper and Bewick's and our two North American ones the Trumpeter and Tundra are nesting within two hundred miles (or less) of each other.

The leader of our 1973 group was Joe Linduska, from FWS. FWS was also represented by Earl Baysinger then director of the Bird Banding Laboratory at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, MD. Representing whales was Scott McVay who subsequently became one of my great friends. There was a representative from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and another person representing National Parks. Scott and I, being from the private sector, were in the minority.

We headed up different projects; mine being the Northern Waterfowl Project. Dr. Sasha Kistchinski headed the Soviet side of this project and I the US side (Sladen & Kistchinski 1981). A few years later I was joined by a FWS representative who I seem to remember was

John Rogers, then chief of the Migratory Bird Division in Washington, DC. Later I know it was Rollin Sparrowe who represented the FWS. By the way, it was under Rollin's leadership of the Migratory Bird Division that approval was given for the start in the East of a hunt for the Tundra Swan, an activity that the Swan Research Program has opposed from the start (Serie & Bartonek 1991, Sladen 1991).

My interest was in the Northern Swans because of their circumpolar distribution and Popularity. But the Soviets wanted to start with the Russian Snow Geese because the entire population that breed in Russia were on Wrangel Island. They had been declining and it was thought that the US was shooting too many of them when wintering in CA, WA and BC. That's a story in itself Jim.

I don't think the Soviets trusted Sasha because he was not a member of the communist party, so the first exchange was with Vladimir Jacoby a biologist interested, like me, in bird hazards to aircraft. He visited us in the Fall of (**?1974 – check year**). I'll never forget that first visit.

I wanted to show Jacoby the Snow Geese at the Bear River Refuge in Utah where there were also Tundra Swans. I asked the Refuge Manager there if it would be possible to have accommodation at the refuge because we really didn't have very much money and I was doing it mostly out of my own pocket. In Washington FWS said, "Yes, *no problem*, there would be accommodation for us." A day or two before our visit I phoned the refuge to check that all was OK. The reply I received was, "Oh no, there's no way that you can stay there." "What's the problem?" I asked. "We were told that your assistant had left and there was an empty house". The immediate response, "There's no hot water, the system is down". I shouted back "Well, hmmm, I have spent two winters in Antarctica melting snow for my living and I'm sure the

Russian won't object. In fact there are days in Moscow when the hot water is turned off so he'll be used to cold water. Could we still have this opportunity of using the house to save hotel expenses?"

It worked out wonderfully. I often think this was an important step towards my eventually in July 1975 being the first Westerner to be invited to work with my Soviet colleagues on Wrangel Island in NE Siberia. There was no hot water there!

After this Jacoby and I went to Klamath Falls and with the Refuge manager and CA State biologists rocket netted some Snow Geese to demonstrate the technique and neckband them for Jacoby's benefit. That was the time when Charles Kuralt joined us with his CBS TV "On The Road" van and did a delightful program for CBS News on the geese that our two countries, in the midst of the Cold War, share.

Anyway, Jacoby went back with good stories of trust with this side of the Atlantic which paved the way for Sasha Kistchinski's visit to US. Sasha was a superb biologist... and very revered in the Soviet Union.

**Jim:** I remember taking Sasha to Galena when we were banding white-fronted geese north of there. We were given permission to stay at the Air Force base and eat with the military. Yes, it was the Air Force mess hall there.

Galena was interesting. It was built as a jet port for the Air Force, but at some point they had turned the runway over to the State of Alaska, so it was being maintained by the State, and anybody could land there. The FAA had a flight service station there and private fuel and service for airplanes was available. But there were also, I think, four hangars where jet interceptors were still kept with pilots and crews for these interceptors. Periodically, when

they'd get the right kind of blips over the Bering Sea, these interceptors would go whipping out to make an interception. I remember Sasha always asked before he took a picture, if it was alright to take a picture, but when he saw this military stuff at Galena he never asked and he never took a picture. So this was all happening during the hard part of the Cold War!

The first morning we were there we lined up in the regular chow line like the military did, taking your tray. You could ask for different kinds of eggs and bacons and what-not. Sasha asked me to order for him, stating, "My English is not good enough." But I think he didn't want to speak with a Russian accent to these military guys. So I ordered his breakfast for him and we came out of the chow line. There was an empty table over by the wall, so we walked over there and sat down to eat. A few minutes later four military police walked over with their uniforms, MP armbands, their pistols and their bill clubs!,

**Bill:** Oh, Goodness me.

**Jim:** They had their food trays and came over and sat down at our table. I said, "Good morning". Then I looked up and saw this sign on the wall above that I hadn't noticed before which said "*Reserved for MPs.*"

**Bill:** Did you move off the table and let them have it to themselves?

**Jim:** No! I commented on the sign and said, "Oh Gee, I missed that" and apologized for occupying their table. But they didn't care. We chatted some about the birds and the banding and, like military people anywhere, they were kind of confined in what they could do and they were glad to talk to somebody else. *But Sasha never said a word.* He didn't want to be involved with the American military at all!

**Bill:** Interesting! I've just come back from Galena. That's why I'm with you today Jim. I was a lecturer on the Russian icebreaker Kapitan Khlebnikov now owned by Quark Expeditions. Jocelyn and I have been on this icebreaker twice before when I was lecturing on voyages to the Weddell Sea and more recently (2000) in the Ross Sea. It's a great ship with an all Russian crew. This time we were in the Arctic passing through the Bering Straits and finishing at Wrangel Island which I last visited in July 1975 exactly 29 years ago. This is where I stated the program under the auspices of the US-USSR Environmental Protection Agreement. At that time I was the first Westerner to visit this remote island since the Soviet Union was established.

As I mentioned earlier my Soviet counterpart Sasha Kistchinski wanted me to work with him on the Russian Snow Geese. They were concerned about the Americans shooting too many, particularly in California during the hunting season. This was especially important because the population had declined partly due to a series of bad summers. The technique of coded neckbands interested the Soviets and that's what I helped by colleagues on Wrangel Island do in 1975, as well as paint some of them red with the Rhodamine Red dye – a good Soviet color to make the California hunters aware of (**Film Ref: Snow Geese 1975, Land of the Polar Bear 1985**).

To cut a long story short, the neckbands told us that the Russian geese were arriving ahead of the more plentiful geese that bred in western arctic Canada. Thus by delaying the hunting season by about two weeks the pressure was taken off the Russian geese.

There was a lot of good publicity at that time on our project. We even had the famous Charles Kuralt of CBS TV come and do a program for his "On The Road" when Vladimir



Jacoby was with me neckbanding the Snow Geese at Klamath Falls NWR (**Film Ref: Kuralt 1974**). What an excellent way of dulling the Cold War (Sladen & Anderson 1981, Sladen & Kistchinski 1981, Sladen et al. 1985, Syroechkovsky et al. 1994).

It really worried me the other day when we were presented with a three day ovation to former President Reagan who we were told “ended the Cold War”! He played an important role, of course, but Russell Train advising Richard Nixon started the end - AND - it was the scientists that were in the front lines. Yes, medical people exchanging medical experiences; musician playing music, biologists exchanging biological experiences. They were the pioneers.

It was wonderful revisiting Wrangel Island. Vasily Baranyuk, who we met, was continuing the work I help start 29 years ago. He was a student at that time! He made a very interesting statement that I had no idea was true in 1975. He said, “You know, in those days we thought every American that we saw was a spy.”

Yes, it was wonderful helping to break down the barriers of misunderstanding that had been built up by our respective governments. Maybe my British accent helped a wee bit. But it was a wonderful experience working with the Soviets. And, of course, this very important Wrangel Island project of a conspicuous and popular bird shared by two super-powers has continued since then.

The Soviets wanted me to return again the next year, but I stated, “No, it is Jim Bartonek’s turn to take the call from now on,” and of course now it’s mostly in cooperation with the Washington State Game and Fish people. In fact I believe the FWS International Program under Steve Kohn is still supporting part of it.

It was also a wonderful experience having them visit USA and working with them in

Russia; particularly getting to know Sasha, who died prematurely from colon cancer... very sad. That was a very serious loss for Russian ornithology. His place on our US-USSR Environmental Protection Agreement was taken by Eugeny Syroechkovsky, Sr. (Syroechkovsky et al. 1994). He and his cousin Eugeny Syroechkovski, Jr. attended the Fourth International Swan Symposium at Airlie Center, VA in February 2001.

**Jim:** Here's another story about Sasha from that trip...

**Bill:** Oh, good.

**Jim:** I took him and you to the Alaska State Museum in Juneau. They had one of these Russian symbols from Imperial days with the two-headed eagle each facing in opposite directions. Sasha had been telling me that he'd like to get a pair of trumpeter swans for the Moscow Zoo. And so, he'd mentioned that a couple of times, and I said – at that time, I had some swans and geese at my home here in Juneau and so when we looked at this Russian goose, I told Sasha that I would be happy to trade him a pair of trumpeter swans for a pair of these two-headed eagles and he looked at that and he said, "I think it is extinct"; which it nearly was then, though it has been remarkably revived since.

**Bill:** Imperial? It was not a Soviet emblem? And now it's different?

**Jim:** I believe it has been resurrected.

**Bill:** Well that's very interesting what you say about the Trumpeter Swans. The idea might have originated earlier. I was somewhat opposed to the gift of Musk Ox that Nixon gave to the Russians. I think it was to Brezhnev. The Musk Ox had originally come from Canada to Nunivak Island in Alaska. They were not a truly American gift. And what would happen when

they became very plentiful? Would they invade and harm the Snow Goose breeding grounds on Wrangel Island where they were released the year I visited in 1975? By the way, how did they come to Nunivak Island?

**Jim:** No, they were originally from Greenland.

**Bill:** Oh really?

**Jim:** Yes. They're a little different than the Canadian ones perhaps and the Alaskan Musk Ox that were exterminated by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century whalers: but maybe not very different as they are known to travel long distances. They were brought from Greenland by boat, then train, then boat, then train across America to Fairbanks in the 1930s. They didn't do well in the hot Fairbanks summer and some died. So they were taken down the Tanana and Yukon Rivers and across to Nunivak Island which was a reindeer reserve at that time. They increased slowly on Nunivak, eventually provided stock for other places in Alaska, and are now doing quite well

**Bill:** Oh. So Nixon's present to the Soviets were all Greenland Musk Ox and not truly native to North America and especially to USA! Oh that gift was not a truly United States gift!

But, what about this one? On one occasion when I was visiting Russell Train's farm in the Chesapeake Bay (checking out his wild Tundra Swans) ... I think it was when he was entertaining McMillan, the then British Prime Minister in England ..... they were discussing the impact of the British/French supersonic jet (the making of this aircraft in US had been banned by Congress0...

**Jim:** The Concord...

**Bill:** Yes! They were discussing the environmental impact of the Concord, etc. Russ was saying, "Well, you, McMillan, you give me advice on jet things and Sladen will give advice on catching swans."

Anyway, we were at his farm and Russell Train told us of another present given to Brezhnev by Nixon. It was about to be sent having already been purchased at great price; a very fine porcelain of a swan. No not a native North American swan, but the non- native **MUTE SWAN**, *Cygnus olor*. When he saw the gift Russ gasped. The Administration advisors at that time had not known that a mute swan was in no way a true American gift. Little did they know then that only a few years later the alien and aggressive Mute Swan would become such a controversial bird, especially in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay!

So I was very much in on this idea of the Trumpeter Swans going to Russia; a truly North American bird; rare and mostly breeding in the US. Russ Train promised to promote the idea.

I won't go into all the details. In our first attempt to get them they had a bad time at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center where they knew how to look after cranes but not swans!

**Jim:** Yes, I had caught those swans and accompanied them to Patuxent WRS and was pretty disturbed at the way they handled them.

**Bill:** The second attempt was a success. Of course this time the Swan Research Program was permitted to look after them! And I was given the opportunity by the high-ups of FWS in Washington DC to accompany them to Moscow for the zoo there. I think it was two pairs. They were shipped in large kennels with a big lettuce attached to the kennel door, a method of feeding them I believe you and I developed when shipping your Trumplings from AK to MD.

This is really quite an interesting story. For this occasion I relied upon the FWS in Washington to re-apply for my visa for this visit. Despite many reminders, it wasn't ready by the time I was about to leave from my cottage on the Western Shore of the Bay with one of my grad. students in my truck... my radio-tracking Ford Econoline van. When it was getting so late

that I might miss the plane in NY I called them in DC, told them our route and shouted “Catch us up with the Visa”. Yes, we were really late in leaving Maryland with the swans for this Aeroflot flight in New York.

I was going at 80 mph on the New Jersey turnpike when the police stopped me for speeding. Just at that time, luckily, I think it was Stephen Kohl, who was in the FWS International office, caught up with me in his car with my visa (going at a higher speed than we were with the swans!)! I said to the police, “Would you please discuss my speeding with the Fish and Wildlife Service? They’re the people who are responsible for me going eighty miles an hour.” The police just shrugged their shoulders and went on their way for a more gainful and less controversial ‘catch’.

When we arrived with the Trumpeter swans at Kennedy Airport in New York barely half an hour before this international non-stop flight to Moscow the lady at the ticket counter said, “Oh Dr. Sladen, the captain of this Aeroflot flight wants to talk with you onboard his plane.” Have you ever had the captain of an international flight summoning a passenger into his plane? He announced, (*much emphasis*) “The swans are going to fly in the passenger apartment. Where would you like to put them?”

This is almost certainly because for some time before the flight I had been fussing about the cargo area. “Were the cargo places in Aeroflot properly pressurized?” ... and.... “It would be very, very bad if the swans arrived dead! It would be an international disaster!” So, I guess having the two kennels in the passenger compartment was the Soviet solution to any such event. So I went into the plane and asked, “Where is the coldest part of the plane?” He said, “Oh we can shut off the heat if you want.” What, in an important international flight?

**Jim:** And it was full of passengers, as well?

**Bill:** It was going to be full of passengers, they hadn't been allowed on board at that time and remember I was late in arriving! So the captain and I selected the front of the plane as being the coolest and the safest part. I went back, checked on the swans, relaxed and waited.

Another message came back, "He wants to see you again." I went on board again. "The kennels will not fit in that part of the plane," he said, "We've measured them, they won't fit. Now, where would you like them?" After further discussion we decided the best place would be just inside the entrance/exit, where the passengers enter. After this was settled to our mutual satisfaction, I made a very foolish statement stating, "Well, of course, if we have an emergency we can push the swans out first, can't we?" What a reaction! He stood up to his full Soviet height, and said "You are flying Aeroflot, Dr. Sladen. We never have any problems with Aeroflot aircraft!"

So that was a very good and safe way of transporting the first Trumpeter Swans to the Moscow Zoo. By the way, they did not have first class passengers on Soviet aircraft. But they did have special seats that had red... yes red.... curtains that you can pull around. One of these was close to my two kennels and that's how I traveled to Moscow. It was a wonderful non-stop flight and the swans landed in excellent shape.

Another interesting thing was that, I think it as John Rogers at FWS HQ in DC, he said "Okay, since we're paying for this flight, the rules are that you must fly by an American carrier" My immediate response was, "Well, what comes first, the swans or the American airlines? - There's no way that I can fly non-stop without flying Aeroflot." So that was why I had such good treatment from Aeroflot. Can you imagine this sort of treatment I would have had from Pan American or United airlines?

Anyway, that's the story of the first Trumpeters Swans for Russia. They did very well. In fact they bred and multiplied. When I was last in Moscow in about 1990, just before the Soviet Union broke up I visited the Zoo again. They had bred well and I believe the Leningrad Zoo had received some of the offspring.

**Jim:** So, they've been moving them around?

**Bill:** Yes. I believe they have hybridized. I must get in touch with them again and check on this.

**Jim:** Did not we help catch them?

**Bill:** Of course you did: in the Copper River Delta?

**Jim:** Yes, out of Cordova, AK. It was the year that Bruce Conant was expecting his first baby in another ten days or so. We were only going to be gone for a couple of days. That didn't bother him... but why don't you tell what happened?

**Bill:** Well, I'll tell my side of the story, but I think your side is more interesting. My side of the story was that it was one of those wonderful clear days where you could see even the mountains of British Columbia; rather unique weather in that part of Alaska. I was tending the swans for their transport to Juneau. Suddenly there were all sorts of excited conversations going on between you and Bruce Conant. They dashed to the weather station in Cordova and looked very serious. Then they said we've got to go, we've got to go immediately because Bruce's wife is in labor. Yes, she had already started labor, *and* moreover, Bruce was a part of this delivery because he'd been doing natural childbirth and all that stuff. So we took off from Cordova in perfect weather and flew along the coast. Then did you not start to fly inland? Was it up the Alsek River?

**Jim:** Well, we stopped at Yakutat to get gas...

**Bill:** Oh... okay...

**Jim:** That's where we heard the good news from the Weather Bureau.

**Bill:** Oh! That the weather was pretty bad?

**Jim:** Yes, there hadn't been a single airplane in or out... jet or... commuter, or anything, in and out of Juneau that day. It was just dense summer fog. But Haines was okay and Cape Spencer didn't look too good. So we decided to go up the Alsek River.

**Bill:** Let me go on with my part of the story..... As we were flying up that river I got very excited. I saw some swans down below when we flew over into the British Columbia side and yelled, "Would you please do a circle to just confirm what I've seen," I thought this was an important sighting, perhaps the first breeding of Trumpeter Swans in this little known part of BC. You gave me a very firm reply didn't you? "We are not going to look at swans at all, we've got to get to Haines as quickly as possible while the weather lasts there...."

**Jim:** Well...

**Bill:** Those were the first recorded trumpeters in that area, weren't they?

**Jim:** Yes, in northern or northwestern British Columbia.

**Bill:** So it was an important sighting.... Yes?

**Jim:** For British Columbia...

**Bill:** But you did not do that turn? You accepted that they were swans.

**Jim:** What I remember was that the Beaver had a full load of gas and three people and four swans!

**Bill:** I think it was probably six swans.... I must check our records



**Jim:** And, for fuel economy you didn't want to add a lot of power for climbing, so we climbed slowly, not using much fuel and we got up to five or 6,000 feet which is what we needed to go through the mountains and we looked at these swans down there and then I remember you saying, (*with accent*) "I don't suppose... I ought.... to suggest we go down and take another... or closer look?"

**Bill:** I see, so there was a real reason for your refusal!

**Jim:** And I agreed with you. It was an important SWAN observation.

**Bill:** Did you not go back and check the sighting later? Or did someone else check they were breeding?

**Jim:** Well, we didn't. We don't do work in British Columbia unless we are invited. So, we reported them. We didn't do any additional surveys in British Columbia.

**Bill:** Did they confirm that they were fairly new to that area?

**Jim:** Yes, they hadn't been reported there, but then nobody had been flying around there.

**Bill:** So anyway, you landed further up the river didn't you? Before we got to Haines... and you were taxiing...

**Jim:** No, we got to Haines and talked to the radio at Haines and still no airplane had been in or out of Juneau. We could, however, look down Lynn Canal and it was nice and bright and clear and so I thought that we might as well go as far as we could. We got to Point St. Mary's which is five or six miles north of the Juneau road system at Echo Cove. That was where the solid fog was on the water. So it seemed like we could taxi that far through the fog and get to the road and call on the radio and get somebody to come out and pick us up by car. So that's what we did. I didn't mention we had Jamie with us.

**Bill:** Oh, that's right...

**Jim:** My son James was with us.

**Bill:** Yes, that's right, yes. Jamie. Yes, so you had a precious cargo of not only swans and Sladen, but your son!

**Jim:** But the fog was so thick that I didn't dare taxi on the step. So it was a slow taxi; three or four miles an hour. It took an hour or so for us to cross there because if I taxied faster, I was afraid I might encounter a boat or a log or something. I just couldn't see far enough ahead. Eventually, we got to Echo Cove. It took a little searching to find the cove because we couldn't see much of the shoreline. I was taxiing on a compass heading.

Then I was able to get through on the radio. Jack Hodges had come out to meet us. We loaded up the swans in our Volkswagen bus and raced off to the hospital, swans and all. In the end.....we got Bruce to the hospital *a half hour after his daughter was born!*

**Bill:** And his daughter now called. . . . wasn't she given a Russian name?

**Jim:** Well her first name is Tamara, but we'd been taxiing down Lynn Canal so the Conants gave her the middle name of Lynn. So her name is *Tamara Lynn Conant*. And Lynn Canal, of course was named over 200 years ago by George Vancouver for his hometown which was King's Lynn in the county of Norfolk, in east England

**(Bill has checked the name as OK - he knows the town in his old country!!)**

**Bill:** Oh? L-Y-N-N...

**Jim:** Yes.

**Bill:** Oh, so there's a little bit of a connection there.

**Jim:** Yes, Point St. Mary's had something to do with Vancouver, but that was in Bridgett Cove. His mother's name was Bridgett. And Burners... it's in Burners Bay and his mother's

name was Bridgett Burners, so we assumed that 200 years ago Vancouver, who'd been scattering British admiralty names all up and down the coast of Alaska got homesick when he arrived there... got thinking about his mother and his hometown.

**Bill:** Well, I'm never very scared when flying. I just leave everything to the pilots who I always trust. But I really was a bit scared on that occasion because of those enormous logs that drift around in that area. Could be pretty dangerous if they hit the plane...

**Jim:** If we were going fast...

**Bill:** Sometimes, I seem to remember you just getting a little bit faster and then slowing down again. Anyway, it was an exceptional experience. And Lynn is now grown up and an exceptional skier and does all sorts of other wonderful things.

**Jim:** Tamara Lynn. She's an officer in the U.S. Navy and just got through Atomic Engine School. She's going to be working on the aircraft carrier *Lincoln*.

**Bill:** Hmm.

**Jim:** Well, I think we ought to digress back again to the time when we were all spending the evening at Cal Lensink's home on the Clarence Rhode NWR in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta. We began to talk about an international swan meeting. Cal and I both were familiar with the work of Peter Scott and the Wildfowl Trust in England and convinced that his place at Slimbridge would be the perfect place for a swan meeting.

**Bill:** What year? What year was this when we were together because this is significant?

**Jim:** I think it was '68

**Bill:** It was '68, not before 1970 then?

**Jim:** Yeah.

**Bill:** Okay. Okay. Yes.... That was when we were just putting tarsus, colored tarsus bands on the swans at his refuge. The first year we worked with you in banding swans

**Jim:** Right. So we made that suggestion and much to our amazement, because of your close friendship with Peter (later to become SIR Peter Scott).... you arranged it all.

The meeting coincided with the publication of the book **The Swans** by Peter Scott and the Wildfowl Trust (Scott 1972) which included a good deal of material in the appendix by Cal Lensink and myself.

**Bill:** Yes, we also provided some new data for them on weights which I believe was entered in their Appendix.

**Jim:** Cal and I were denied official travel though we each presented papers

*(King, JG. 1973. The use of small airplanes to gather swan data in Alaska. Wildfowl 24:15-20*

*Lensink, CJ. 1973. Population structure and productivity of Whistling Swans on the Yukon delta. Wildfowl 24:21-25)*

So we went to Slimbridge at our own expense and had a wonderful time. Every night at Slimbridge we had cocktails in Peter Scott's studio overlooking a pond of wild Bewick's Swans, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*, being fed under floodlights. After the meeting Peter worked out an itinerary for us to visit the Trust's sanctuaries at Caerlaverock where we saw lots of wintering Barnacle Geese, *Branta leucopsis*, and at Welney where we saw Whooper Swans, *Cygnus cygnus cygnus*. My wife Mary Lou was with us. You did all that wild, wrong side of the road, driving!

**Bill will add more here later eg FWS had not at that time taken international cooperation seriously (other than with Canada and Mexico). There was no International Affairs Office in Wash. DC. It is possible that the IWRB Swan Research Group of 1970; the US/USSR Environmental Protection Agreement of 1973; Sladen's friendship with**

President Nixon's Secretary of Interior, Rogers Morton and Natt Reed; Sladen's visit as the first Westerner (since USSR was established) to work with the Soviets on the Wrangel Island Snow Geese in 1975; and him being a Britt (!) – helped a bit to get things going

**Bill:** That's very interesting. I had forgotten about how it all started. Of course the Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge was very happy to accept us because of the good publicity it would bring in. Peter Scott wanted to have swans better represented in the International Waterfowl Research Bureau (IWRB)

( **Bill's added note – Sep05:** If not already mentioned (earlier or later) it might be worth adding a small account of three aims that Peter and I had, the first two working through the IWRB.

- 1) Start a Swan Research Group to highlight the importance of swans as ambassadors of wetland conservation. Swans were the most important attraction at his Wildfowl Trust in England.
- 2) To lure USA and Canada into an up to now entirely Eurasian organization that was founded during the Cold War to create an awareness of the importance of linking up with the Soviets who held almost all the waterfowl breeding grounds in their territories. Once USA was involved then the other Americas would join in. Also a strong point: there also might be some funds available from the US!
- 3) To establish a Wildfowl Trust of North America following in the same pattern as his Wildfowl Trust in England. **End of extra note)**

During the IWRB Executive Board meeting, held at the same time as the First Swan Symposium at Slimbridge, UK, the IWRB Swan Research Group was added to the IWRB Research Groups, with me as the overall coordinator. Our group became very active. Amongst other things we prepared the first circumpolar color marking scheme (in this case for swans) with many countries (including Canada, Baltic States, Denmark, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, USA, USSR) all working together (Sladen Strangely, UK never came into this scheme because from the beginning Peter's crowd vigorously opposed the use of neckbands. That's a story in itself already told earlier in this interview (with references)!

We held our 2<sup>nd</sup> International Swan Symposium in Sapporo, Japan in 1980. That was a really interesting experience. You were there weren't you Jim?

**Jim:** Yes.

**Bill:** Peter had his pocket full of ties. These were Wildfowl Trust ties with two Bewick's Swans on a background of different colors. It was so funny because he gave the ties away in relation to the importance of the recipients. Thus, gold was for the most important; green for the less important, etc. For example, he had to make up his mind whether the mayor of Sapporo was the most worthy to give the gold tie to. It was all very well organized.

**Jim:** Well the Prince was there; the Crown Prince ... who's now the Emperor of Japan? He came around and shook hands with all of us... He didn't speak any English, as I recall, but he had his interpreter there who said some nice words...

**Bill:** Yes that's interesting because the Crown Prince's brother, Prince Takamado and wife, Princess Takamado visited us at Airlie in 1997. It happened that we were training our first

group of Trumpeters to follow an Ultralight; the ones we led from Airlie to near Cambridge on the E.Shore of the Chesapeake Bay. We were also looking after a flock of Sandhill Cranes that winter that had followed Bill Lishman from Ontario to us at Airlie. The two Imperial highnesses just had a ball. They were a wonderful couple and most interested in our activities.

**Jim:** What was their reason for visiting you at Airlie?

**Bill:** Well you know how the Japanese love swans and cranes? A friend of mine who knew them well told them of our swan collection. They visited us for a two day relax between two state visits to New York and Washington, DC.

But anyway, to get back to our subject, the IWRB (now called *Wetland International*) . The third International Swan Symposium (ISS) was at Oxford, again in UK, in Dec. 1989. I wanted the fourth in USA and started negotiating two years ahead. The Wildfowl Trust appeared to be keen to have it in UK again..... yes, the fourth symposium. That's a long story. *Finally*, it boiled down to either Estonia or America with less than a year to go. From then on it was comparatively easy going because the small contingent of Estonians couldn't possibly organize such an event. So it eventually settled at my place at Airlie Center, near Warrenton, Virginia.

Our fifth ISS will be in Chile, and organized by Professor Roberto Schlatter a dear friend and one of my former Johns Hopkins PhD students. He did his PhD thesis on the South Polar Skua, *Catharacta maccormicki*. These symposiums are all good for the conservation of swans and wetlands.

**Jim:** Well those meetings have all been great. I gave a couple of papers at the Sapporo one. One on tundra swans and one on trumpeter swans, both on the same day, with only a couple of other papers between.

I got some kind of a bug over there. The day that I was to do my papers, I was not in very good shape, but I had everything on slides, all my information, so I just talked to the slides. The morning before I gave my paper I went to sleep for a couple of programs. Mary Lou woke me up for my paper.

**Bill:** In time for your turn

**Jim:** Yes, I got up, - gave my presentation and sat down and promptly went to sleep again and slept for two programs until it was time for me to get up and give my second one. What a contrast with the, most of the times that I've presented something at a meeting like that.

Immediately before, there's no such thing as relaxing let alone going to sleep.

**Bill:** But, you had your slides ready.

**Jim:** They went all right.

**Bill:** Well, I shouldn't tell this story about the Oxford Symposium in 1989. No, I won't.

**Jim:** Yeah, do.

**Bill:** Well, I was the coordinator of IWRB's Swan Research Group at that time, so had a chance to review all of the papers (which I also did for the Airlie conference). When I reviewed Jerry Serie and Jim Bartonek's paper *Harvest Management of the Tundra Swan in North America*, I said, "Well, I've got to write a paper that swans should not be hunted," because I still feel very strongly that swans... neither Tundra nor Trumpeter Swan should be hunted. Jerry was unable to come over, he had some last minute medical problems. So John Hodges from your FWS office in Juneau, Alaska, read this paper.

**Jim:** Uh-huh.



**Bill:** And I'll never forget, dear John stood at the podium at the start, then walking away from it saying, "I am reading this paper in the absence of the authors, but I don't necessarily agree with its contents". In other words, he was indicating that he probably agreed a little bit more with swans not being hunted than with "harvest managing them".

(see references: Sladen 1991a. Swans should not be hunted. *Proc. Third IWRB Internat. Swan Symposium*, Oxford, UK, 1989. *Wildfowl*, Supplement No. 1:368-375. and Serie and Bartonek. 1991. Harvest Management of Tundra Swans, *Cygnus columbianus* in North America. *Proc. Third IWRB Internat. Swan Symposium*, Oxford, UK, 1989. *Wildfowl*, Supplmt No.1:359-367.)

**Jim:** Yeah, neat.

**Bill:** I should add, with great sincerity, that Jerry Serie, the FWS Atlantic Flyway Representative headquartered at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, MD, is a good friend and doing a fine job. We don't always agree on the hunting side, especially when it concerns swans!

**Jim:** Well, it looks like we're getting down to the end of this....

**Bill:** Well, can we say the date again?

**Jim:** Yep. Go ahead.

**Bill:** Second of August, 2004 and it's an interview, Jim King in Juneau and Bill Sladen from Virginia and the Swan Research Program.... Reminiscing.

**Jim:** And this is the end of side two.

**[End of Tape One, Side Two]**

**[Begin Tape Two, Side One]**

[Editors note: Tape quality of Tape Two is not as good as Tape One. There is audible static at the beginning and end of both sides.]

**Jim:** This is the third day of August 2004 and Jim King is talking with Professor Bill Sladen at Sunny Point in Juneau. We've been reminiscing about swans and some of the things we worked on together and some of the other work that Dr. Sladen has done. So we're up to the part about trumpeter swans. [tape breaks briefly]

**Bill:** I can't remember off hand when we started marking trumpeter swans, but I'm pretty sure it was 1973 because it seemed that it was very important to know more about Trumpeter movements. Previously a fair amount of banding had been done but all with metal bands only. There had only been very few recoveries. They would have to be dead birds from natural causes, not birds that had been shot because it was illegal. Big fines were levied in those days. So my first effort at adding neckbands was with Bob Richey who at that time was Assistant Manager of the Kenai Moose Range. We flew in the FWS Piper Cub aircraft. Later we neckbanded Trumpeters in the Copper River area and stayed at the Reluctant Fisherman Inn at Cordova. That was the first time I met Dr. Dave Weaver (of FWS and the Trumpeter Swan Society), with his family. In 1977 Sasha Kistchinski joined us there. Was it not with you Jim?

**Jim:** Oh, you were at Martin Lake.

**Bill:** I was at Martin Lake, yes, but not with either Dave Weaver or Sasha Kistchinski. I was at Martin Lake during the big rain when the water rose 6ft with our first Swan Research Program's Swan tour, I think mentioned earlier in this interview.

**Jim:** Well you were there and we were in Cordova. That was in 1981.

**Bill:** From our neckbanding program in Alaska, we confirmed for the first time that the Alaska swans were wintering along the Pacific coast, i.e. not mingling with the Rocky

Mountain population. One neckbanded bird was seen as far south as the mouth of the Columbia River (ADD REF). Aren't they going much further south now, for example into California?

**Jim:** Well, rarely.

**Bill:** Rarely. Okay, but they will sooner or later, I mean, as long as they don't all die in British Columbia and Washington State from lead poisoning.

**Jim:** Well, your record from the Columbia River is interesting. In 1968 we found nearly 3,000 Trumpeters in Alaska. The question then came up: where do they go? At that time there were known to be trumpeters in British Columbia but they were finding less than a thousand in that Province. However, there's a reference in Lewis and Clark's journals to trumpeters on the lower Columbia.

**Bill:** Oh really?

**Jim:** So I got the Christmas bird counts from Washington and Oregon and there were no Trumpeters reported

**Bill:** Were they reported as tundra swans?

**Jim:** Yes, there were tundra swans on the lower Columbia. Frank Glaser, who was the old predator hunter for many years in Alaska (glowingly described in Jim Reardens biography, Alaska's Wolf Man, 1998) had retired and moved to a place near Portland. I stopped by to see him. He said he'd been hearing trumpeter swans somewhere along the Columbia there. Since he had heard lots of trumpeters in Alaska I was pretty sure he knew what he was talking about. He just wasn't the kind of person that made mistakes. So I wrote to the compiler of the Christmas Bird Counts in Oregon and asked him if he thought there was any possibility of some of the tundra swans that they were reporting (in those days they were called whistling swans)

were perhaps trumpeters. I got a snippy letter back that (*emphasis*) “they knew how to identify their birds”,

**Bill:** Well now, I need to know the history of when trumpeters were first reported from Alaska. Were you the first to report them? How many were estimated breeding in Alaska and where?

**Jim:** Oh well – Trumpeters were reported by early explorers. For example Dall

**(JIM still need CHECK THESE NAMES and give ref??)**

described them at Ft. Yukon. I think there are eggs from the Ft. Yukon at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC. Other people described them in the early days.

Then in the 1920's or 30's they'd been described in the Lake Minchumina area. These sightings are all recorded in Winston Banco's book on the trumpeter.... but when in the early 1930's, the National Park people in Yellowstone had done a count of trumpeters in that area and came up with less than a hundred, ... that drew a lot of publicity because prior to that there were ornithologists saying that the trumpeter was extinct. So then there was big excitement about finding nearly a hundred of them around Yellowstone. This finding resulted in the establishment of the Red Rock Lakes NWR just west of Yellowstone where most of them nested.

**Bill:** Well, I've always heard that there were only sixty-nine and they were at Red Rocks. Were they also in Yellowstone... that's the same area as Red Rock?...

**Jim:** Well, they were scattered around in that area. The Fish and Wildlife put some management people there to do some education to keep people from shooting them. They also established a winter feeding program at the Refuge. And there was quite an effort to help these swans. It made a certain amount of news. It was overlooked that there were in fact trumpeters

in both the Grand Prairie area in Alberta and several locations in Alaska. Then when Hank Hansen came to Alaska in 1954, he was the first full-time waterfowl biologist and was an airplane pilot. He had the means of really check out the swans in a way biologists traveling by boat or along the highways or by dog team just didn't have an opportunity to do. Mel Monson, using a boat did however identify some Trumpeters on the Bremner River above Cordova. So in the late 50's, I think, Hansen was able to show that there were something over a thousand Trumpeters in Alaska. You can find this in Hansen's monograph.

Then in 1968 we did another count and came up with nearly 3000 Trumpeters (HA,Hansen, Shepherd,PEK, King,JG &Trauger,WA. 1971 The Trumpeter Swan in Alaska. Wildlife Monogram, No.26).

**Bill:** You were involved with that?

**Jim:** Yes, I was involved with both of those. In 1968 we came up with almost three thousand. There seemed to be an increase in the swans because a lot of people that had been watching swans just felt like they had been increasing. Of course we did some more counts and they continued to increase. We wondered what was different. The habitat in all these big valleys in Alaska hadn't really changed much. The Gold Rush had gone to other places.

**Bill:** Umm.

**Jim:** Yes nothing had changed. It wasn't until the late 70's, or the 80's that we began to think, "Oh what's happened is that the swans have learned to feed in agricultural fields..." Formerly they had wintered on pond weeds in estuaries, just above the salt water. And they had this safety valve thing, they'd winter just above the salt water in the estuary, but if the fresh water where they were wintering did freeze up they could do alright by drifting down into the

saltier area that didn't freeze. And although we don't have any scientific proof that learning to feed in the fields is what enabled them to start to increase again. Nobody's refuted that theory either.

**Bill:** (this is an insert made after the interview.....) Well what you say Jim is very interesting. Also early in the 1970s the Chesapeake Bay Tundra Swans (then called Whistling Swans) moved into the harvested corn field (this was before they started enjoying the winter wheat) but the reason for this was because of a massive die off of the aquatic vegetation there. This was not new because in previous years they had adapted to agricultural ground in the Great Lakes. Our birds had to adapt. But after they had adapted they found it was much easier getting their needed nutrition in fields than in the water. SRP has examples of pairs separating in the Bay before migration (females getting increased nourishment in fields, male sticking to SAV) but reuniting in the breeding grounds. In fact I believe one of our Colville River Delta neckbanded birds did this. I must look this up in my field note books.

**Jim:** It seems like it's about the way it has to be. So back to the Pacific Trumpeters; Bill started with the neck bands and straightened out some of the question marks, like whether they were on the lower Columbia...

**Bill:** You know, they were certainly scattered everywhere and I don't think we dyed them at that time. I believe we did two more seasons of that e.g. 1973 to '75 season. And that was good enough. We went back our Tundra Swan research. I think that's about it for the Trumpeters.

When I started living in the Chesapeake Bay, I founded the Wildfowl Trust of North America, patterned after Peter Scott's Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge, England We had some

very distinguished people on our board: Peter, of course, also Lo Hallaby, the wife of Najeeb Hallaby, who was at that time president of Pan American – *good old Pan American*. We also had Robert O. Anderson, chairman of the board of ARCO. Also Al Rockwell CEO of Rockwell International, Anne Mathias wife of Senator Mathias and Aileen Train, wife of Russell Train former Administrator of EPA and then President of WWF USA. Peter Scott and Russell Train were a wonderful help in fundraising in those early days of the Trust. For example, we had a three part fundraiser for the Wildfowl Trust of North America (WTNA) in which he provided us with one of his original painting of pintails. One hundred limited prints were made by Mill Pond Press (free!), everyone who came to the three dinners had one and the original was raffled. Our three dinners were in NY, PA and MD. The NY one was at the River Club hosted by a person named Mr. Wainright who I have lost contact with. The PA was hosted by Al Rockwell and our Maryland one was hosted by Arthur Kudner (our then WTNA Treasurer) of Talisman Farm, the large adjacent property to WTNA in Grasonville. By the way, the person who won the original Peter Scott original painting was our wonderful supporter Betty (Mrs. Campbell) White, now dead after living to over 100 years. She gave us our first \$250,000 to start WTNA which helped us purchase the property in Grasonville, MD. So that's a good link with the swans and with Peter Scott.

**Jim:** Well, Bill, one of the really nice days that I had with you with regard to swans was the time I was working in Washington, DC. We went to the Chesapeake in the winter to look for swan neckbands. And you, at that time, had made acquaintance with a lot of the people that had mansions overlooking the swan habitat, in the Bay. I remember particularly they weren't all millionaires. One of them was a farmer that had a gravel pit on his farm and swans came in

there. We got there in the evening and he had this little kind of clubhouse, outside his main house where he and the farm hands would drink homebrew. We got in on that. And in due course, his wife came over with pizza. And this guy was an enthusiastic swan watcher. At another place there was the lady who had taken pity on you and built some kind of a little gazebo so that you could watch swans from her front yard without getting wet.

**Bill:** I don't remember that second one but I do the first one. He was the owner of the gravel pit close to the Patuxent River. I don't think he did any farming because there was not much farming there. But he owned this gravel pit and was making good money out of that. That was the area where we discovered a pair of whooper swans that had escaped from somebody's collection and had even started to breed. I can't remember his name just now. But Jim, weren't you with Carl Lensink and wasn't that the occasion when you came down to work at FWS HQ in Washington to sell the idea of the very first FWS color brochure for Alaska... wasn't that when you were down for that purpose?

**Jim:** I think that's right. We were there for a month, I think... And the color brochure was for the late Rogers Morton, then Secretary of Interior. He wanted a color picture book about Alaskan birds to illustrate the need for new refuges under the ANILCA legislation.

**Bill:** That's right, now I remember. Rogers Morton was a good friend. I knew him because he was congressman for the Chesapeake Bay. His close advisor and Treasurer was Peter Thompson, whose schoolboy grandson Schuyler Benson was one of our interns at the Wildfowl Trust of N.America. We were in and out of Pete Thompson's home on the E. Shore as he had a collection of waterfowl. In fact they were his Mute Swans that escaped into the Bay during the 1962 hurricane that were the start of the now close to 4,000 undesirable and controversial Mutes in the Bay.



And, by the way, the present Congressman for the E.Shore, Gilchrist, is also a really fine environmentalist. In fact, he's changing the law so that the mute swan an alien non-native can be crossed off the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Back to Rogers Morton: he had a very elegant house in the Bay. I remember this was at a very critical time for the Prudhoe Bay oilfield, when decisions were being made like: "No oil will be sent to Japan, it should all used for domestic purposes."

**Jim:** Well, I don't think we went to Morton's house. I'd have remembered that.

**Bill:** Yes. you'd have remembered it.

**Jim:** I remember seeing Rogers Morton downtown at the Dept. of Interior. We also went to Phil Williamson's house.

**This still to be resolved. But unfortunately Williamson is now in bad memory health, His house was close to Easton and his office, decked with every kind of Big Game heads, wwas in Cambridge, MD)**

**Bill:** His office in Cambridge, Maryland?

**Jim:** No, his house.

**Bill:** Oh. His house was in Easton, not Cambridge.

**Jim:** Williamson **(Jim, was it Morton or Williamson??)** had come to Alaska, probably in the late 50's to go caribou hunting. His guide was a good friend of mine. I had resigned from FWS that fall to go back to college, so I had gone along as an assistant on that hunt.

**Bill:** Jim, I didn't realize you were a caribou hunter among your other many accomplishments!

**Jim:** Yes, we helped Phil shoot a huge caribou as well as a huge sheep and helped carry them out. So it was kind of fun to see him back there in Washington where he lived. But he was watching swans too, there, I think.

**(THIS NEEDS SORTING OUT - I SUSPECT YOU ARE REFERRING TO MORTON NOT TO PHIL WILLIAMSON. PHIL HAD HOMES IN EASTON, MD AND ANTONIO, TX NEVER IN WASH DC)**

**Bill:** Well, Phil was one of the vice presidents of the Wildfowl Trust of N.Amer. and an avid big game hunter. He was also very well connected with foundations such as the Rockefeller groups. He was a vice president of Game Coin International. Despite him being a big game hunter, something I find difficult to approve of, we got on very well. He had an extremely valuable wildlife/hunting library. He was a really wonderful guy.

**Jim:** So when you were studying the Tundra Swans in the Bay, you were in and out of elegant homes?

**Bill:** Yes, we were either looking for neckbands or tracking the swans we had harnessed with transmitters. I would go to the front door with my wellies on, or hip boots. The first thing I would ask is, "Would you prefer me to take my hip boots off or smell my socks?" It was a fifty/fifty response, it was either: "I don't want the mud on your boots so I am prepared to smell your socks - take them off." On one instance I walked into the living room of an extremely elegant mansion overlooking the Bay. The carpets were wall to wall and golden. The owner shouted, "*Don't tread on the rug-rats,*" which of course, were his crawling grandchildren! We certainly had some wonderful experiences meeting all kinds of people – watermen, retirees, Bay researchers, yachtsmen, school children, landed gentry, etc.

You really have to read my *National Geographic* article (Sladen 1975) which starts off with you sighting one of our yellow-dyed swans when flying over the Colville Delta on Alaska's N.Slope. We were the first ones, with Bill Cochran of the Illinois Natural History Survey to put radios on swans. We started in 1967, I think; again in '69, and then really did some good work in 1970 following them all the way to the Great Lakes by our tracking plane (Sladen & Cochran 1969, Sladen, Gunn & Cochran 1970, Sladen 1971a, Sladen et al. 1974). No, not this new-fangled business of satellite tracking where the biologist sits (most of the time!) at a desk and analyses data coming in on his/her computer. The info tells you where the bird flew (in a straight line) from A to B. Our plane tracking told us every turn of the bird as it migrated north. They never flew in a straight line!

Actually our tracker was George Fenwick (Sladen 1975) who was one of my, first Johns Hopkins PhD students. I am very proud of him because he is the founder and President of the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) which does so much good through ABC's Bird Conservation Alliance in mobilizing bird groups. George was the tracker, and our pilot Everett Schiller, our Johns Hopkins School of Public Health department's professor of parasitology. They followed the birds all the way up to the Great Lakes and then on into the prairies. So we had lots of interesting escapades; too many to recount in this interview. But our main stay was our volunteers. We totaled about 100 of them across the continent. We could have never done the work we did without them: really wonderful.

**Jim:** They were people watching for the neckbanded swans?

**Bill:** Yes, our Maryland volunteers would take days off and drive to places like Walpole, Ontario where many of the swans made their first stop. And I remember our most worthy volunteer, Jeanette Evans, with her husband (a vice president of

Baltimore Gas and Electric) reading as many as one hundred neckbands in one day. So we gathered all this data for almost nothing. Now it seems research cannot be done for less than \$100,000. We still have this enormous database and it's available to anybody, in fact we gave it to Chris Dau in the FWS Anchorage office the other day. It was also used extensively by other researchers (Allen et al. 1991, Limpert et al. 1987, Nichols et al. 1992, etc., etc.),

**Jim:** Well, I remember that was really fun. You were telling those that you met on the Bay that they were seeing swans in the water in front of their homes we had neckbanded in Alaska some 4,000 miles to the NW. That was a pitch they weren't used to. I'm sure those people got a kick out of this knowledge and possibly being pitched by that English accent of yours!

**Bill:** Yes I guess so.

**Jim:** It got their attention and raised their awareness.

**Bill:** I could go on telling story after story of our experiences with swans and people. By the way a lot of it can be found in the 20 Swan Research Program Reports our volunteers, Cathy Ness (my research assistant at that time at Johns Hopkins) and I wrote between January 1970 and July 1984 (Sladen 1970-1984). For example, when establishing the Wildfowl Trust of N.America (WTNA) Peter Scott (who was on our Board) with his wife Phil (Lady Scott) visited us a few times and always wanted to see the swans in the Bay. By the way, we also had visits from his daughter Dafila Scott who did her PhD thesis at Cambridge (England!) on the Bewick's Swan. They were very anti-neckbands so it was quite a fete to be able to take a picture of Peter holding a swan we had recaptured with a red neckband; the red indicating it had been banded in the Canadian NWT. On another occasion we were able to sight a swan that had been neckbanded in Utah, thus demonstrating on that occasion the first evidence

that there are a few swans that cross from the Western population to the Eastern one. Actually, very little was known about the eastern and western populations at that time. By our systematic neckbanding, mostly in the Alaskan tundra and with the aid of our many volunteers SRP was able to define the limits of these two populations. With a few exceptions, as indicated above, all the eastern Tundra Swans bred from Baffin Island in the east as far west as the western limit of Alaska's Northern Slope. The Western population breeders started south of this and including the Seward Peninsula and the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta and Bristol Bay, Alaska. Thus the Tundra Swans breeding along the Chukotka Peninsula in NE Siberia, the other side of the Bering Straits, would be migrating into the Western Population.

**Jim:** Hmm.

**Bill:** I remember seeing the first positive record of the Bewick's Swan in North America. That was an interesting occasion. It was probably in the winter of 1976 or beyond (Evans & Sladen 1980). I was searching for the neckbands we had put on the Lesser Snow Goose on Wrangel Island in NE Siberia. I believe it was in the Klamath Falls area. I was also checking out the Whistling (now called Tundra) Swans there, also for neckbands placed on in Alaska. To my amazement I sighted a Bewick's Swan. Its behavior suggested it was paired with a Whistling Swan and they had a brood of two grey-necked youngsters. I immediately alerted the birders of the region and I believe they confirmed the sighting and resighted what was probably the same pair for the next few winters. I also alerted my Soviet colleague Dr. Sasha Kistchinski who that summer had been working in the Chukotka Peninsula in NE Siberia and had discovered breeding Whistling Swans there. Strangely, he had sighted a Whistling paired with a Bewick's and a brood of three cygnets. He had not marked them but had collected one of the cygnets for the Moscow Zoo leaving two. Were these the ones I sighted in California?

By the way, I believe this was the first authentic record of a Bewick's Swan seen in N.America.

**Jim:** Very interesting indeed.

**Bill:** Yes and one up for biologists helping to heal the Cold War wounds through the US-USSR Environmental Protection Agreement of 1973.

**Jim:** Well, this tape's about to run out, again. A shorter tape than we had before.

**Bill:** Do we have enough time for all you want to ask me?

**Jim:** Yes - I want you to talk about Trumpling Swans.

Well, there's a little tape left, so let's talk about your experiences at Martin Lake. It was in 1981. Bruce Conant and I were counting Trumpeter Swan broods and we were based on Cordova. We stayed there three weeks and during that time it rained sixty inches in Cordova. You were in part of that storm at Martin Lake.

**Bill:** Yes, that was the year when the Swan Research Program organized its first Alaskan Swan Tour. It was small party. We had been on the North Slope staying with the Helmericks in their home on the Colville River Delta. We wanted to see the trumpeters in the Copper River Delta and had thus arranged with the Forest Service to stay at the cabin on Martin Lake. The first days of our visit were absolutely wonderful with the rare for those part clear skies and views of the tops of the surrounding mountains. Then it and rained and rained and RAINED. I can't remember how long we were held up at the cabin but I do know we missed our air connections and the water on the lake rose (I think) six feet swishing up close to the cabin. Weren't we with Garvin.....?

**Jim:** Yes, Garvin Bucaria.

**Bill:** Yes, dear Garvin. What a character! He was such a cheerful guy and our guide

**Jim:** We managed to get you back to Cordova..... And Dan Logan was out there too in the Copper River delta. Bruce and I had flown him out to Bering Lake. He was there for the rainstorm too.

**Bill:** Wasn't he the young Forest Service biologist for the Chugach National Forest HQ at Cordova?

**Jim:** Yes, correct.

**Bill:** Well Jocelyn and I visited him again, staying at the famous Reluctant Fisherman Inn in Cordova during June 1999 16 years later; still wonderfully friendly and helpful; still with the same job. In fact we sowed the seeds then for collecting Trumpeter cygnets from his area for our 2000 Ultralight experiments in NY and VA. (Sladen 1998, Sladen et al. 2002)

**Jim:** . Well, that pretty well finishes that –

**[End of Tape Two, Side One]**

**(Begin Tape Two, Side Two)**

**Jim:** Lets get back to talking about the Trumplings

**Bill:** OK, but you talk about Koog and Tina first.

**Jim:** Yes – this was a good joint effort between you in the Wildfowl Trust of North America and me in Juneau, Alaska.

**Jim:** The year after we moved to Juneau, I think it was 1965, in the fall, Fred Robards picked up a grey juvenile tundra swan with a badly shattered wing that had been shot out here on the Juneau tide flats. He took it to the veterinarian, Cliff Lobaugh, who amputated the shreds of the wing, sewed it up and gave him a tranquilizer and an antibiotic. Fred then brought the bird over to our house and left it with us. Mary Lou and I got it feeding and it healed up. We

kept it under the house for a while, that winter, but it really became part of the family. Our kids were small then. The following spring we'd leave this yearling swan out in the yard and he'd actually go for a walk with us, following along, tagging around. When the girls were out playing, he'd be near by.

**Bill:** How old were the girls at the time? (ASK MARY LOU - SHE'LL KNOW !)

**Jim:** Oh, I can't remember...four or five I think! The swan needed a name, but we didn't know whether it was a male or female so we had to pick a name that could go either way. We finally called it Koogruk, an Eskimo word for swan...

**Bill:** Hmm.

**Jim:** And Koogruk became Koog for short... or Koogie. So we had Koogie for quite a few years. We added other birds to our collection, built ponds and developed a little bird farm here. And after a few years, I think Koog was about ten, and he paired with a female trumpeter swan. There were some ups and downs with that, but eventually this trumpeter female, who we called Tina because she had come from Martin Lake in the Cordova area, bonded with Koog.

**Bill:** Tina was also a juvenile, so we would know her age as well as Koog's?

**Jim:** She was five years old and Koog eleven when they first nested. She was bigger than Koog and had both wings; Koog had only one. Koog mostly built the nest that she laid her eggs in. Then, of course, there was a big question mark as to whether these eggs would hatch because we didn't know whether a smaller tundra swan with one wing was capable of fertilizing the eggs. But they hatched... and then we didn't know what to do with them. So, we kept them and Koog and Tina raised a family and we had them all around.

The following year, they nested again and we decided we didn't want to have any more of these hybrids. We didn't think that anyone would want them, so we took the eggs away. Yes,



we had last year's young still. You know, they were part of the family. So the second year, they didn't hatch anything. That was one of the years that Bill Sladen came around and it turns out that we were wrong about nobody wanting these hybrids.. (*emphasis*) *Bill wanted them* to take back to Johns Hopkins University and do some research on the hybridization between these two closely related swans. He became familiar with the two parents.

In the next few years, Koog and Tina produced somewhere around twenty healthy young that we called "Trumplings"

**Bill:** Yes the name is **TRUMP**eter X whist**LING** or *Trumpling Swan*. Of course later this Whistling Swan's name was changed to Tundra Swan, so if we were to name them today they would be called **TUNDR**a X trump**ETER** or *Tundreter Swan*.

**Jim:** Right. So they all went back to Johns Hopkins, or I should state to Bill Sladen's Swan Research Program. In April swan families separate and the older birds get ready to nest again and the young birds just get excluded from the nesting area. So, that was the point that we'd pack them up and send them back to *Dr. Sladen in Maryland*. So, Bill please talk about what you did with the Trumplings and why you wanted them.

**Bill:** Well, there were certain conditions we worked out before I took them. For example, if there were any deaths, the Smithsonian had the first priority to have them. That was very important because this hybrid was, as far as we knew, new to science. They were unique birds. We also wanted to know whether they were fertile. Most waterfowl hybrids are infertile, so we wanted to know if they were capable of producing and raising young. The first batch of Trumplings that we received from Jim was seven; three females and four males. By the way we sexed them on arrival in Maryland. Jim you weren't too keen on sexing them!

**Jim:** We didn't do that because we always theorized that's a poor way to treat your friends.

**Bill:** Yes, of course it is very humiliating for the birds. You can pluck feathers; you can pinion them without local anesthetic (but we do use local) and they don't budge. But when you sex them, they don't like it. It must be a very delicate part of the body, the cloaca.

But anyway, we had four males and three females. That meant two pairs and an odd male. Two of the pairs successfully bred and reared young Trumplings. The lone male eventually paired with a female Trumpeter and produced our first "Trumpetlings" i.e. TRUMPETer X TrumpLING. We have all this documented and it needs to be published.

So they've all bred and we now have three generations of these hybrids. Our interest in these, the only known hybrids, is that with climate change the boreal forest habitat for the Trumpeter is moving into the tundra, habitat for the Tundra Swan. Though categorically denied by FWS and the Trumpeter Swan Society we together with our collaborator, Russ Canniff, in Washington state have for the past ten or more years believed there must be hybrids in the wild. Of course, our captive hybrids are all pinioned and thus cannot escape into the wild.

Actually I have just returned from a visit to the Koyukuk NWR, Galena, AK. Here I have been working with Mike Spindler (refuge manager), biologist Jenny Bryant in this area where the two swans are overlapping.

The fascinating thing about these hybrids is that they either have no yellow on the bill (like a trumpeter) rare in our F1 birds, or a little yellow, typical of the tundra, or even lots of yellow. And it's absolutely fascinating because it seems that there's a dominance for the yellow on the bill, like our N. American Eurasian counterparts the Whooper and Bewick's Swans that have lots of yellow on the bill (Evans & Sladen 1980).

Let me give you an example of this. One of our Trumplings mated with a male Mute swan. She produced five what we call Mumpling Swans (MUte X truMPLING). The front part of the bill is like a Mute Swan the rear part like a northern swan. The rear part of one has no yellow, one has yellow like a Tundra, two have blotches of yellow, and our fifth has as much yellow as you can expect in a Whooper Swan. This last bird, by the way, was a “polish” variant, i.e. one born with white down and grew white feathers, not the typical grey of juveniles.

But anyway, our interest has continued over the years and we are cooperating with professors from George Mason University, Fairfax, VA and in Denver University on the molecular and taxonomic aspects of the Northern Swans. Some of the wild specimens are coming from the unfortunate die-off of swans, mostly Trumpeters, from lead poisoning in the BC and WA wintering grounds

With this in mind I believe eggs from Alaskan Trumpeters for the restoration programs in the Mid-West some years ago should not have been taken from the Minto Flats where there have been reported Tundras nesting but from places like the Copper River Delta, where the population is solely Trumpeter.

So that’s part of our side of the story. You need to tell the story of sending Tina to us in Maryland to see if she would pair off with one of our trumpeters.

**Jim:** And she didn’t.

**Bill:** I think we had her for at least two seasons in MD.

**Jim:** She didn’t show any interest...

**Bill:** Oh, it was only one season. And then we sent her back to you. And what happened then?

**Jim:** Well, backing up a little, we'd been providing you with these nice broods of Trumplings and suddenly you decided you had all you wanted. So we got thinking: "Well maybe we'll break up this pairing of Koog the Tundra and Tina the Trumpeter" And you know, in the inimitable way of know-all people, we thought we'll just give Tina a chance to pair off with a Trumpeter raise her own kind for a change.

**Bill:** Well we gave her a choice and it wasn't just one male.

**Jim:** And that was the same with Koog in his pre-Tina days. We had two or three female Tundra Swans in our Juneau collection, but he chose Tina. We also had some eligible females when we sent Tina east.

**Jim:** When Koog was separated from Tina, for a couple of days, he just cried .... you could tell it was just a mournful call.

**Bill:** Oh yes I know the vocalization you refer to. We call it the "lost call" . When geese or swans get separated, we hear that call.

**Jim:** Well our whole family knew that he was really upset. You know, he was part of the family, had been for twenty years, then, I guess or maybe not quite twenty years. And everybody was mad at me for separating them. After a while he quit calling, but he was an angry, upset bird all that winter and the next summer he didn't have *anything* to do with *any* of the other swans. He was never near them, he made his own way around the yard, and would eat by himself out of the feeders we had placed for him.

So, you Bill reported that Tina was in about the same condition and that she hadn't shown interest in any of your birds. We decided that the divorce had been a mistake and we had to reunite them. So we worked out a deal to get her back and found a guy coming from

Washington that could bring her back in his baggage, in a big kennel box. You delivered her to the airport so this guy could bring her. She probably traveled in her kennel for ten hours or so before arriving at Juneau airport.

We took her to the pen where she'd always lived and let her out of the box. She came out, looked around. Her old feeder was there. She took a little bite out of the feeder. She wasn't really feeding, she was just checking to see if it was the same stuff she was used to. Then she went over and got a little drink out of the pond. And then she let out this little call. Koog was in some bushes, out of sight. He hadn't seen any of this. But after hearing that little call he just came *crashing (emphasis)* through these bushes and there was absolutely no question that he recognized that call and came charging out. Then followed a lot of triumph displays and head and neck bobbing

**Bill:** Fantastic.

**Jim:** They sat down together and were never more than ten or twelve feet apart for the next eight years. That next spring she laid a clutch of eight eggs, the biggest clutch she'd ever laid. We took most of those eggs away, but she hatched some of them. That was the last clutch of eggs that Tina hatched. Koog began to age: you could see. For example, his sight was failing. He had cataracts, not complete, but his eyes were getting a little cloudy. And he always used to do his triumph display when anybody came in his pen. This was standing there fluttering his one wing and bobbing his head and calling loudly. As he got older, he learned to do that from a sitting position!

**Bill:** Oh, really? And still vocalizing ?

**Jim:** Yes, he could flap his wing and bob his head but he didn't have to get up. When he did get up, you know, he looked like some of the rest of us when we get out of a deep chair. So I think he must have had a little arthritis or something.

**Bill:** So how old was he? You should have a pretty accurate age since you first rescued him in his first year (in juvenile plumage).

**Jim:** Well he died when he was twenty-nine.

**Bill:** Twenty-nine? – that's quite a record. I think he was longer lived than any of our swans. I believe Margaret (Z175), one of your first Trumplings of hatch year 1977 who was mated to Trumpling Dennis, survived for twenty-five or twenty-six years.

**Jim:** Hmm.

**Bill:** These were F1 Trumplings. Twenty-nine is a pretty good age. And how long did Tina live? She was also a known age bird.

**Jim:** Well, she was five or six years younger than Koog. She got killed in the winter by a Horned Owl.

**Bill:** Oh. Not a bald eagle?

**Jim:** No, it was a horned owl.

**Bill:** How do you know that? Was it at night?

**Jim:** Well, earlier we'd lost a swan to a pair of horned owls. It was a five year old healthy bird that at night had its eyes plucked out and its throat cut. It was in the winter. Mary Lou killed one owl with a snow shovel. Next Tina had her throat cut and bled to death; a 26 lb pinioned swan killed by a 2.6 lb owl. A few days later, Mary Lou was going somewhere in the car early in the evening and in the car lights she saw another owl had Koog by the neck. She

jumped out of the car and stepped on the owl and killed it. Koog wasn't badly hurt. He probably had some puncture wounds. What the owl's do is they go for the jugular and the victims bleed to death. Or they go for the eyes. After the two owls were killed we didn't have any more losses. By the way, the two owl carcasses were turned over to the FWS raptor biologists.

**Bill:** And then the bald eagles took over: which you really have to respect.

**Jim:** The eagles never bothered the swans. They don't hunt at night.

**Bill:** Well we've had an eagle kill a swan when our collection was at Al Rockwell's place at Farmington, PA. I think it was a mute swan. All the evidence pointed to a bald eagle. They are quite capable of doing it when a bird gets weak and less able to defend itself. Maybe both your birds were getting old and probably not so aware of potential predators, though it is difficult to justify the loss of that first swan. So, what was the age of Tina then?

**Jim:** She was about, twenty-two or three.

**Bill:** That's also a pretty good age.

**Jim:** So what's happening to the remnant trumplings now?

**Bill:** They are not remnant. I'm doing this from memory..... we lost our last F1, the original generation that you gave us. Margaret (Z175) was as already stated twenty-five or twenty-six when she died: last year or 2003. But most of the offspring of your original seven have successfully bred and produced young, There was no hybrid sterility with your Trumplings Jim! Of course all these hybrids are pinioned. We pinion them within the first month of hatching. Not one of these hybrids has ever been allowed to escape into the wild. At that young age pinioning seems to be a painless process that can be done quickly with a nail clipper. All the swans in our large collection are living in wild habitat. The only difference is that they

cannot fly (unless allowed to by permits as for our ultralight experiments) and the climate and daylight factor for breeding might be different e.g. for Tundra Swans to breed. We try not to interfere with their breeding. So there's a high mortality from natural predators. For example one of our Trumpeter pairs breeding for about the sixth time was just about to hatch its ten eggs when what we believed otters came and destroyed them all. They'll lay up to seven or more eggs and perhaps two or three will fledge. Probably our mortality is comparable to mortality in the wild.

Non-breeders are lumped together in the large 56 acre Airlie reservoir, all with neckbands for easy recognition of individuals. They have a chance to pair off on their own and are a source of much interesting behavioral information. When paired they are removed (or should be!) and placed in suitable habitat either in our Airlie complex of 3,000 acres or in neighboring properties.

At present we have about 12 Trumplings, all relatively young and none of your originals, as well as 3 Trumpetlings i.e. offspring from a Trumpeter paired with a Trumpling. These are extremely interesting because it is this kind of hybrid that we will most likely find in the wild after what we believe (but not the FWS !!) the Trumpeter and Tundra Swans have been mixing for now at least 30 years.

These Trumpetlings have a voice almost identical to the trumpeter swan and they don't have any yellow on the bill. So if we breed trumplings with another trumpeter it seems that the yellow doesn't show up so well. Yet when a Trumpeter breeds with a Tundra Swan quite a lot of yellow can appear on the bill.



**Jim:** Hmm.

**Bill:** We had one pair; one of your original Trumpling males mated with a Trumpeter that produced our first Trumpetling brood. When the young matured and called like their father, the mother Trumpeter forsook her Trumpling mate and demonstrated pairing behavior with her offspring. So your original Trumpling Swans have been of great scientific interest and continue to be so in the hands of the Swan Research Program. But there's so much to be done, really. We're doing all of this mostly out of our own pockets. We need get a grant to study these in more detail!

Our hypothesis, that's Tom Wood and Pat Gillevet, two professors at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA and myself – our hypothesis at the moment is that the four taxa of Northern Swans (Whooper, Trumpeter, Tundra and Bewick's) are one super species.

**Jim:** Well you have been doing other research such as vocalizations and behavior, haven't you?

**Bill:** Yes, we've done a bit on behavior. More is needed. Tom Wood published a paper on vocalizations of the Trumpling Swan in comparison with the Tundra and Trumpeter in the 4<sup>th</sup> International Swan Symposium held at Airlie center, Virginia in Feb01. Trumplings are absolutely in the middle between their two parent species in weight, egg size, growth, etc. Of course there are heavy tundra swans and light trumpeter swans; even these two species overlap. So if you're reintroducing trumpeter swans in the Lower 48 states it's very, *very* important to know, with *no doubt at all* that they're trumpeters and not a mixture with some Tundra genes in them. Thus all Trumpeter eggs should have been collected from the start from a place such as the Copper River delta where we know the population is pure Trumpeter. I am not sure if this was done in the early days.

**Jim:** Some of these birds when they died, went to the National Museum of Natural History in Washington DC?

**Bill:** Yes.

**Jim:** How many?

**Bill:** Oh, I can't remember; two or three adults and some young and eggs. Then they said they could not take any more

**Jim:** They use a lot of space on museum shelves.

**Bill:** Yes indeed.

**Jim:** When we originally rescued Koog we did some speculating about raising, or keeping alive a juvenile swan with only one wing and thinking: "Well, what kind of future does a swan... a young male Tundra Swan with only one wing have? It's never going to fly or migrate or do all of the things that swans do." But in this case, in Koog's case, the future was that he became a *Research Associate of Johns Hopkins University*, making an important contribution to science as well as to swan conservation.

**Bill:** That's a very appropriate ending to the *Trumpling Story*. And you must not leave Tina out of the picture she has to be a *Research Associate* too. Moreover, she had frequent visits with faculty and students from "*The Great John*" (our friendly term for the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions where I was professor for so many years) when she came to join us in the Chesapeake Bay.

**[abrupt end of tape]** when talking about Bruce Conant again. **[End of Interview]**

**End of Bill Sladen's editing with Jim King's additions and corrections 5May06 83 pp. plus further small changes at Airlie 13Jun06**

Below for further reference are two more items concerning Bill Sladen:

A Biographical Sketch & Curriculum Vitae with list of most publications including films



### **Biographic Sketch for William J.L. Sladen**

Professor Emeritus, Johns Hopkins University; Director, Environmental Studies at Airlie, a USA citizen since 1962, Bill has two medical degrees, MB, BS and MD (London), and a DPhil (PhD) in zoology (Oxford). He taught ecology and comparative behavior (1957-1985) to graduates at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore. Affiliate Professor of Environmental Sciences and Policy, George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia (1998-present). As Director of Environmental Studies at Airlie, he guides the programs of education and research at Airlie, Warrenton, Virginia maintaining a collection of over 150 swans of nine different taxa and a 500 acre Field Station., Clifton Farm on the Airlie complex

Research scientist, explorer and expert on polar birds, especially penguins, geese and swans, Bill is also an amateur botanist having made collections for the British Museum and Smithsonian from Macedonia, Siberia, Alaska, Falkland Islands and Antarctica. An enthusiastic supporter of organic and sustainable agriculture he promotes habitat restoration that encourages regional native flora and fauna.

His long-term Antarctic ornithological research in the late 1940s to 1970s involving the banding of over 100,000 penguins, albatrosses and other birds were the first of its kind. In 1964 he was the first to discover DDT residues in Antarctic penguins and seals (*Nature*. 1966. 210:670-673) thus demonstrating global pollution by this long-lasting pesticide.

His more than 50 years experience of waterfowl research in North America (including Alaska), Western Europe (including Lapland and Iceland) and Wrangel Island, Siberia pioneered techniques in capture, circumpolar marking and radio-telemetry. In the 1970s he defined the 8,000-mile round trip migration route of the Tundra Swan (see *National Geographic*, Jul'75) as a part of a team advising the Air Force and FAA on bird hazards to aircraft. More recently, with his team at Airlie, he has made extensive studies of Resident Canada Goose populations, as well as developing new techniques in teaching Canada Geese and Trumpeter Swans migration routes with ultralight aircraft that spawned the popular Hollywood movie *Fly Away Home*.

In addition to publishing over 130 scientific papers, his popular films, made to illustrate his research, have been shown worldwide, especially on all major USA networks, NOVA and BBC. His involvement with conservation organizations includes: founding chair of Baltimore Zoological Society (now Zoological Soc. of Maryland); founding vice-president of Maryland Chapter, Nature Conservancy; founder of the Wildfowl Trust of North America, Grasonville, Maryland; founding member and president the Antarctic Society; member Antarctic Club (UK), British Ornithological Union, American Inst. Biological Sciences and fellow, American Ornithological Union.

Awards include Member of the British Empire (MBE) from King George VI, the Polar Medal from Queen Elizabeth II, the 1991 Explorers Medal (Explorers Club, NY) and Member-at-Large of the Garden Club of America. Two mountains are named after him in Antarctica.

He gave up medicine and plastic surgery for championing conservation of the Natural World.

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Revised 12Jun06

M.B., B.S. (medical) 1946. London University (Middlesex Hospital, University College).  
M.D. (pathology) 1952. London University.  
D.Phil. (PhD - zoology) 1955. Oxford University (Wadham College).

### **Medical & Biological appointments:**

- 1943-45 During World War II served in the London Emergency Medical Service. Senior medical student appointments: (i) Pathology; Central Middlesex Hosp., London. (ii) Ambulance train in southern England after D-Day. (iii) Medicine; Royal Hosp., Wolverhampton. (iv) Casualty Officer; Mildmay Hosp., London. (v) House Surgeon (radiotherapy & cancer) to Sir Brian W. Windeyer, Mt. Vernon Hosp., London.
- 1946 Intern; general medicine & surgery, Princess Alice Hosp., Eastbourne.
- 1946-47 Intern; Jaw & Plastic Unit, Basingstoke under Sir Harold Gillies and other plastic surgeons.
- 1947-55 Medical Officer, biologist & photographer with the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (FIDS) (now British Antarctic Survey) under leadership of Sir Vivian Fuchs, spending 3 years in Antarctica (two winters and one on expedition ship R.R.S. John Biscoe); later working on results of research on (i) medical bacteriology at London & Oxford Univ. and (ii) biology of Antarctic penguins under David Lack, FRS at Edward Grey Institute, Dept. Zoology, Oxford Univ. Theses on the two subjects earned doctorates in human pathology and zoology. When in Antarctica was station leader at South Orkneys (1949-50) and scientific liaison officer to the late Governor Falkland Islands, Sir. Miles Clifford.
- 1956-57 Rockefeller Foundation post-doc. Fellowship to Johns Hopkins Hospital & School Hygiene & Public Health under Dr. Curt P. Richter (JH Hospital Dept. Psychobiology)..
- 1957-58 Research Assoc. 58-61 Asst. Professor. 61-69 Assoc. Professor.
- 1969-85 Professor (Ecology & Comparative Behavior), Dept. Pathobiology, Johns Hopkins Univ., School of Hygiene & Public Health (now Dept. Molecular Microbiology & Immunology, JH Bloomberg School of Public Health).
- 1986-88 Professor (part time) Dept. Psychology, Johns Hopkins
- 1983-86 Director. 87-88 Honorary Director, Wildfowl Trust of North America.
- 1989-05 Director, Environmental Studies at Airlie – Swan Research Program.
- 1986- *Professor Emeritus, Johns Hopkins University.*
- 1988- *Director Emeritus & Founder, Wildfowl Trust of North America.*
- 1999- *Affiliate Professor, Dept. of Environmental Sciences and Policy, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.*
- 2006- *Director Emeritus, Environmental Studies at Airlie – Swan Research Program.\*\**

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Professional societies (present): Amer. Bird Conservancy; Amer. Institute of Biological Sciences; Amer. Ornithologists Union (Fellow); Antarctic Club; Antarctic Soc.; Maryland Zoological Soc.; British Ornithologists Union; Chesapeake Bay Fdn; Explorers Club; Maryland Ornithological Soc.; National Aquarium in Baltimore; National Geographic Soc.; Nature Conservancy; Scott Polar Research Inst.; Virginia Society of Ornithology; Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (U.K.); Wildfowl Trust of North America.

Awards and honors include: 1949, M.B.E. (Member of British Empire) from George VI, and 1953, Polar Medal from Elizabeth II, for services in Antarctica. Named after Sladen in Antarctica: Mount Sladen, Coronation Island, South Orkneys (60:41S,45:17W); Sladen Summit, Victoria Land (78:07S,162:23E) . 1955, Josiah Macy Foundation, N.Y. to attend 2<sup>nd</sup> conference on □Group Processes□. 1956, Rockefeller Foundation fellowship. 1991, The Explorers Medal of the Explorers Club, New York. 2002, Member at Large, Garden Club of America.

Travels and expeditions: Swedish Lapland (1947) studying waterfowl with Peter Scott. Antarctica and Falkland Islands (1947-1951) with Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey (now British Antarctic Survey). Central Iceland (1953) population studies on wild geese and botanical ecology with Peter Scott and others. Macedonia (1955) botanical for British Museum. Antarctica (1958-59), medical microbiology and zoology with International Geophysical Year (IGY), Operation Deep Freeze IV. Pribilof Is., Alaska, (1960-61-62) medical microbiology, zoology and botany. Antarctica (1962-64-65-66-68-70 summers) Operation Deep Freeze and U.S. Antarctic Research Program. Arctic Alaska (1967-68-69-70--71-72-73-74-77-78-79-80-81 summers). Wrangel Island, N.E. Siberia, and Black Sea, USSR, 1975. Ecotour lecturer: Arctic (3 on *MV Illiria* 1987, 1992 & icebreaker *Kapitan Khlebnikov* 2004) and Antarctica (*MV Illiria* 1989 & *Kapitan Khlebnikov* 1995 & 2000). Has researched or lectured in the Arctic or Antarctica for seven decades.

Scientific activities outside of Hopkins: 1958-1968 Member of Panel on Biological and Medical Sciences (Chairman, 1958-59), and Alaska Native Health Service in research and clinical work on the Pribilof Islands. Committee On Polar Research, Nat. Academy of Sciences. 1958-62 collab. Arctic Health Res. Ctr. 1964-69. US. Rep., Biology Working Group, Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research (SCAR - International Committee for Scientific Union (ICSU) and Chair Sub-committee, Antarctic Bird Banding (SCAR, Biology Working Group). V-P & President (1971-73) Antarctic Society. Founding chair., Board (1976-73) Baltimore Zoological Society, trustee (1973-84). Member, Executive Board, International Waterfowl Research Bureau (1970-90) and Coordinator of the Swan Research Group. USA Coordinator of Project □Northern Waterfowl□ of US-USSR Environmental Protection Agreement (1973-80). Vice-chair., Maryland Chapter, The Nature Conservancy & Chair, Stewardship Committee (1976-78), trustee (1978-83). Advisory Committee on Antarctica, Sierra Club, N.Y. (1978-80). Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine, Division of Polar Programs, National Science Foundation (1978-83). Founder Trustee, Wildfowl Trust of North America (1979-84), Acting Director (1982-83), Director (1983-86), Honorary Director (1987-88); Director Emeritus (1988-). National Aquarium in Baltimore, Animal Advisory Committee (1983-), Advisory Board (1986-96).

Teaching: Courses at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health where supervised many graduate students (Master of Public Health (MPH); Masters or Ph.D.). Organize and assist in education and research programs at Environmental Studies at Airlie. Supervises and guides graduates and lectures to undergraduates at George Mason University at Clifton Farm Field Station..

Land acquisition for Conservation: Assisted in three major land acquisitions: With Dillon Ripley, Sec. Smithsonian for Java Farm & Ivy Neck as part of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC), Edgewood, MD; The Jug Bay Natural Area and Jug Bay Wetland Sanctuary, MD, now County Parks: The Wildfowl Trust of North America for Horsehead Sanctuary, Grasonville, MD, now the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center.

Fields of special scientific interest: Conservation of natural resources: Sustainable agriculture and local grown food: Ecology in Public Health: Polar animal ecology and behavior with special emphasis on sea birds and waterfowl (especially penguins, geese and swans) and the study of marked birds of known age: Upper respiratory infections of man and animals: Botanical ecology: Scientific motion photography, especially in animal behavior studies. Pioneer research on radio telemetry techniques in 1960s and using ultralight aircraft in 1990s to teach geese, swans and cranes predetermined migration routes for restoration of rare or endangered populations.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

(in order of publication and divided into:-)

**Ornithology; General Ecology or Behavior; Botany; Physiology & Biochemistry; Microbiology, Pathology & Nutrition; Popular Articles; Scientific or Professional Films - (\* considered an important contribution)**

### **Ornithology**

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**Scientific and/or Professional films made, produced, or consulted by W.J.L. Sladen  
(selected)**

**A. Published Summaries of Films**

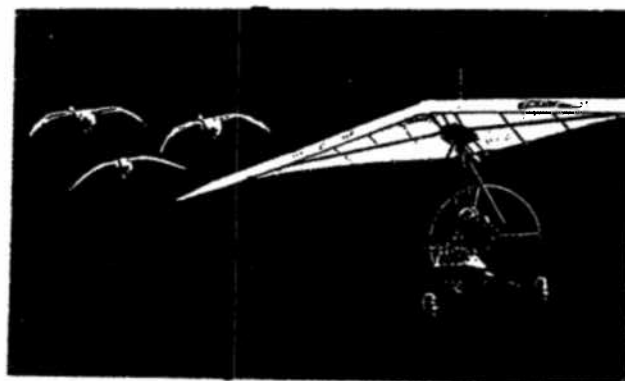
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**B. Films**

- 1951 *The Falkland Islands*. Documentary, 16mm, sound, color, 11 minutes. Produced by Film Workshop Ltd., London. Distributor Central Film Library, London. (With R. Moss).
- 1952 *Scientists in the Antarctic*. Documentary, 16 mm, sound, color, 15 minutes. Film Workshop Ltd., London. Distributor Central Film Library, London.
1954. *Population Study of the Pink-footed Goose*. 16mm, sound, color, 45 minutes. Produced by BBC, London (with Peter Scott.)
1955. \**Wildlife in the Antarctic*. 16 mm, sound, b/w, 30 minutes. Produced by British Broadcasting Company (BBC) Natural History Division for television documentary *Look* (introduced by Peter Scott).
- 1956 *Adelie Penguins*. 16 mm, sound, b/w, 30 minutes. Produced by BBC Natural History Division for television documentary *Look* (introduced by Peter Scott).
- 1957 *Adelie Penguins of the Antarctic*. 16 mm, sound, color, 20 minutes. Produced by New York Zoological Society, distributed by McGraw-Hill Text Films (narrated by Robert Cushman Murphy).
- 1958 *Aspergillosis, a fungus infection of the respiratory system of waterfowl*. 16mm, silent, color, 15 minutes. Produced by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (with RG Schmidt and Carleton Herman).
1960. *Adelie Penguins of the Antarctic*. 16 mm, sound, color, 30 minutes. ABC Television.
1968. \**Adelies of Antarctica*. 16 mm, sound, color, 30 minutes. Produced by NBC Television, *Wild Kingdom* (introduced by Marlin Perkins).
1971. \**Penguin City*. 16 mm, sound, color, 60 minutes. Filmed, produced & written by W. Sladen for CBS television documentary *Adventure*. Narrated by Charles Kuralt and W. Sladen.
- 1971 \**Penguin City*. Same as above but narrated by Sir Peter Scott and W. Sladen for the BBC TV.
- 1974 Kuralt, Charles. CBS News TV On The Road Program. "Snow Geese" About our USSR research.**

- 1975 *Snow Geese*. 16mm, color, 11 minutes. On visit of Soviet scientist Professor V. Jacobi, with W. Sladen, to California and Sladen to Wrangel Island, NE Siberia, to study neck-banded Lesser Snow Geese. Includes film made by CBS Charles Kuralt's "On The Road" CBS program. (Edited by Sladen at National Geographical Society).
1985. *\*Land of the Polar Bears*. (Scientific consultant, adding some of Sladen's film taken on Wrangel Island, NE Siberia). 50 minutes, color television by NOVA. Program mostly about Polar Bears and Lesser Snow Geese breeding there.
1986. *\*On the Wing*. (Wildlife consultant). 30 mins. color, IMAX/OMNIMAX film. Produced by Francis Thompson, Inc., narrated by F. Murray Abraham for Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC.
1991. *\*Swans - The Tireless Voyagers* (Scientific consultant). Also filming work of the Swan Research Program & Environmental Studies at Airlie, VA 20187). 27 mins. National Geographic EXPLORER. Cable WTBS Television. First shown 17Feb91.
1993. *\*Father Goose*. ABC's 20/20 TV Program covering the first ultralight aircraft-led migration of Canada geese from Ontario to Airlie at Warrenton, Virginia. (November).
- 1996 *\*Fly way Home* (Wildlife consultant). Fictionalized film with Jeff Daniels & Anna Paquin on Lishman & Sladen's Ultralight Canada goose migration experiment. Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc., Hollywood, & Columbia TriStar Home Video.
- 1996 *\*Trumpeter Swans* in Animal Kingdom, NBC's Dateline TV Program covering training and the first ultralight aircraft-led migration of Trumpeter Swans from Airlie, Virginia to Crapo, Maryland.
- 2002 *\*Father Goose II* - ABC 20/20 TV Program covering first Canada Goose balloon migration. (*Ballooning with Branta canadensis* - BBC) from nr. Airlie to Bowling Green, VA (Dec. 2001).

WJLS - May98(revised 13Jun06)



Trumpeters  
Yo-Yo, Isabelle  
and Sidney  
follow the  
Ultralight  
in Dec1997  
from Airlie,VA  
to Crapo,MD